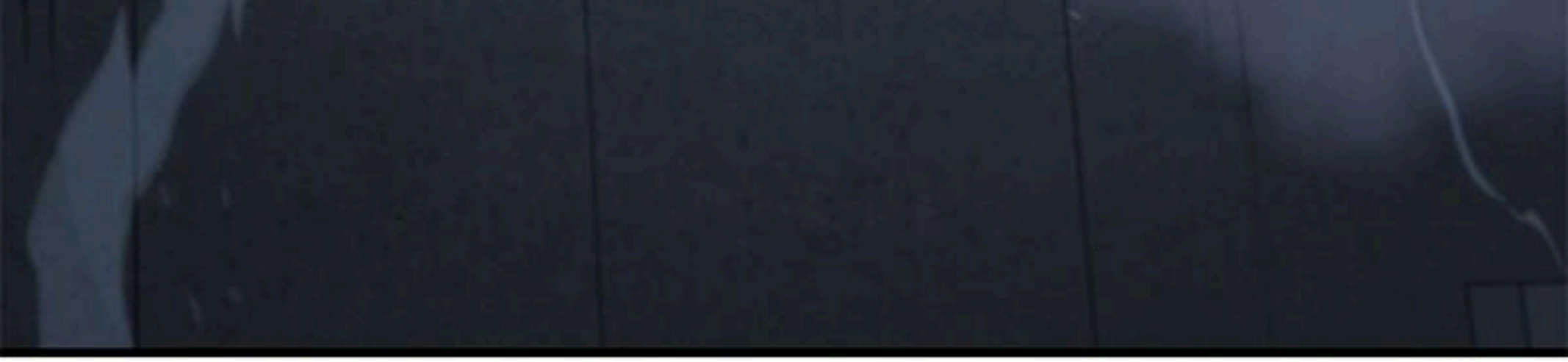
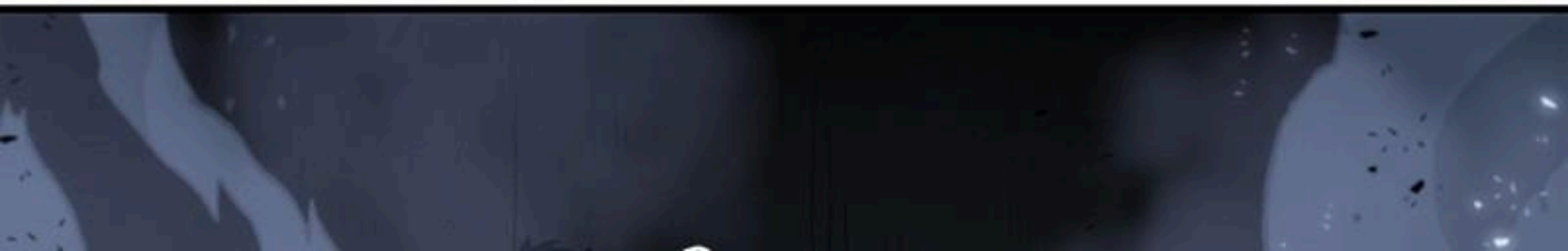


IS IT REALLY OKAY FOR THEM TO GO ON THEIR OWN?



YOU'RE ONLY GOING TO TAKE GILYEONG WITH YOU?!

HIS ABILITY WILL HELP ME TRACK THE MONSTER DOWN.

BUT...!

AND HYEONSEONG...

...PLEASE LOOK AFTER HUIWON. SHE'S NOT DOING SO WELL.

I CAN TELL THAT

YOU'RE TIRED.

GLANCE

HE SAID THAT HE'LL SIGNAL US WHEN SOMETHING HAPPENS.
LET'S WAIT AND SEE.
I'M FINE,

REALLY.

MUMBLE

ROMNIS

CEIADENE

TR

Art by Sleepy-C | Adapted by UMI | Original Story by Singshong

Episode 20

Chapter 5

Warden of the Dark

Part 2

THIS PLACE WHERE GROUND RATS RESIDE...

IS CALLED THE *DARK FOLD* BECAUSE ALL LIGHT IS ABSORBED, AND IT IS DIFFICULT TO TELL WHICH WAY IS UP OR DOWN.

THIS WAY.

IF IT WEREN'T FOR GILYEONG'S [INTERSPECIES COMMUNICATION] SKILL, I MAY HAVE NEEDED TO USE COINS HERE.

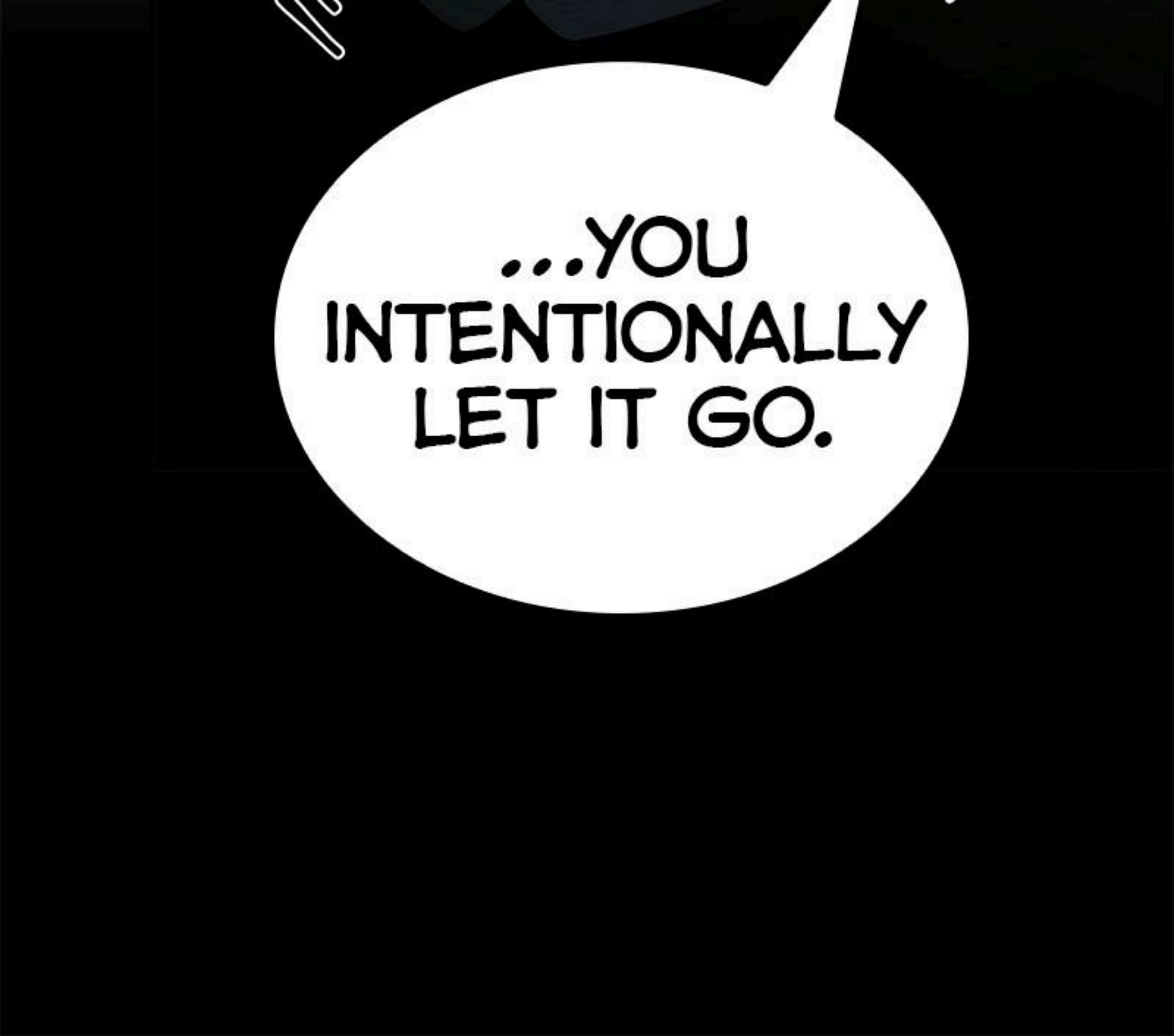
HUH?

YOU LET IT GO ON PURPOSE, DIDN'T YOU?

HUH?

W-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

WHEN THE MONSTER TOOK AWAY THAT MAN AND SANGAH...
HALT


...YOU INTENTIONALLY LET IT GO.

I WAS WATCHING YOU.
WHY DID YOU DO THAT?

DING
[THE CONSTELLATIONS OF THE ABSOLUTE GOOD ALIGNMENT FROWN AT YOUR EVIL DEED.]
CONSTELLATION, THE SECRETIVE
AT YOU AND DEMA

[THE CONST
GLARES AT

DING

HE WAS WATCHING ME WHILE THAT WAS HAPPENING?

HE'S ONE SCARY KID.

I DON'T THINK HIDING THINGS FROM HIM WOULD DO ME ANY GOOD, SEEING HOW SHARP-WITTED HE IS.

IT WAS BECAUSE OF THE GROUND RATS' HABIT.
THEY HAVE A HABIT OF STORING ANYTHING THEY HUNT IN THEIR LAIR.

THEY SOMETIMES STORE RARE OR PRECIOUS ITEMS,

BUT GETTING TO THE LAIR IS DIFFICULT. THE ONLY WAY TO GET THERE IS TO FOLLOW THE TUNNELS THEY DIG.

I KNEW IT'D TAKE MR. HAN, BUT I DIDN'T EXPECT SANGAH TO GET DRAGGED ALONG WITH HIM.

SO YOU'RE AFTER THE ITEMS THEN?

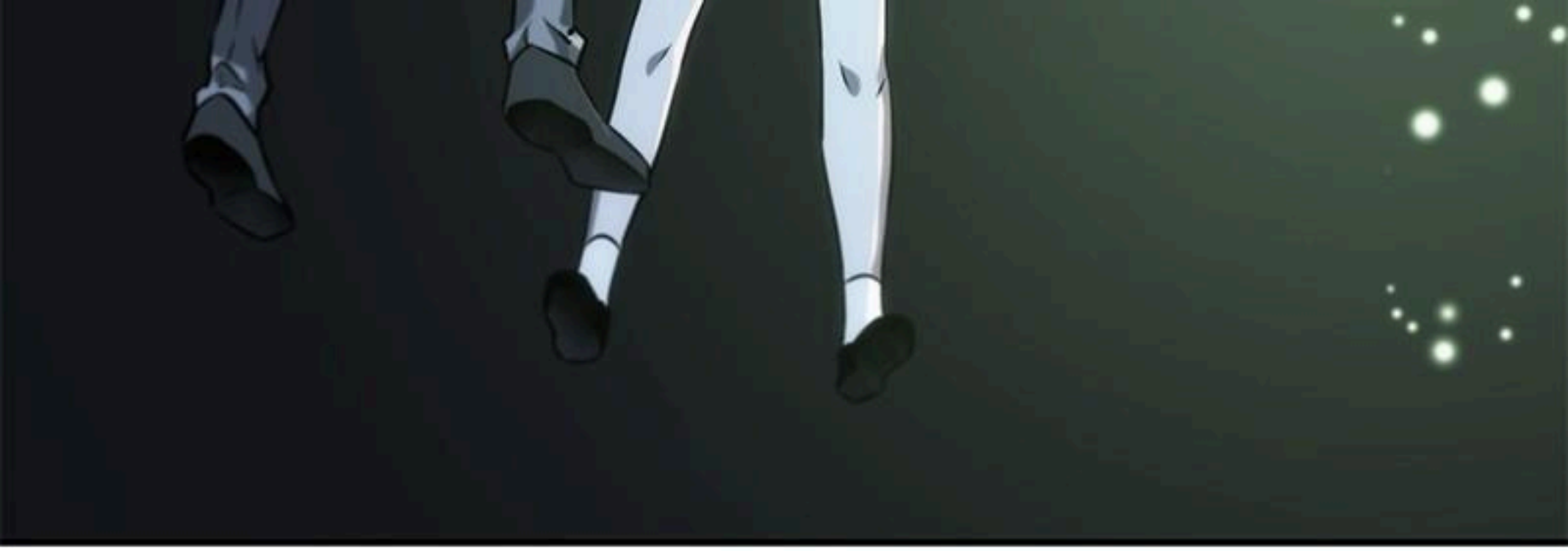
YES. ARE YOU DISAPPOINTED?

NO.

YOU'RE A BAD LIAR.

IF IT WAS JUST THE ITEMS THAT YOU WERE AFTER,

YOU WOULDN'T HAVE SAVED ME IN THE SUBWAY.



I BELIEVE IN YOU.
SQUEEZE

DING

[A FEW CONSTELLATIONS ARE BEGINNING TO TEAR UP.]

DING

[YOU HAVE BEEN GIFTED 200 COINS.]

...

I DON'T

GET WHAT HE SEES IN ME.

I THOUGHT HE WAS MATURE FOR HIS AGE,

BUT I GUESS HE'S STILL JUST A KID.

HE CAN ONLY SAY THAT BECAUSE HE'S OBLIVIOUS TO THE FACT...

THAT THIS WORLD IS FULL OF VILE GROWN-UPS ADVANTAGE OF HIS "MATURITY."

WE'RE ALMOST THERE.

[A FEW CONSTELLATIONS HOLD THEIR BREATH IN ANTICIPATION.]

DOKJA.

ARE YOU A GOD?

OR PERHAPS A PROTAGONIST?

!
HE REALLY IS SHARP. EVEN SHARPER THAN I EXPECTED!

DOES HE EVEN KNOW WHAT HE'S ASKING?
I'M NEITHER A GOD NOR A PROTAGONIST.
IN FACT, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN ENVIOUS OF PROTAGONISTS.

BUT
YOU DO KNOW
SOMETHING ABOUT
THIS WORLD,
RIGHT?

SCRATCH

SCRATCH

SCRATCH

YES...
I DO.

THEN WILL WE BE GRANTED A WISH...

AFTER WE CLEAR ALL THE SCENARIOS?

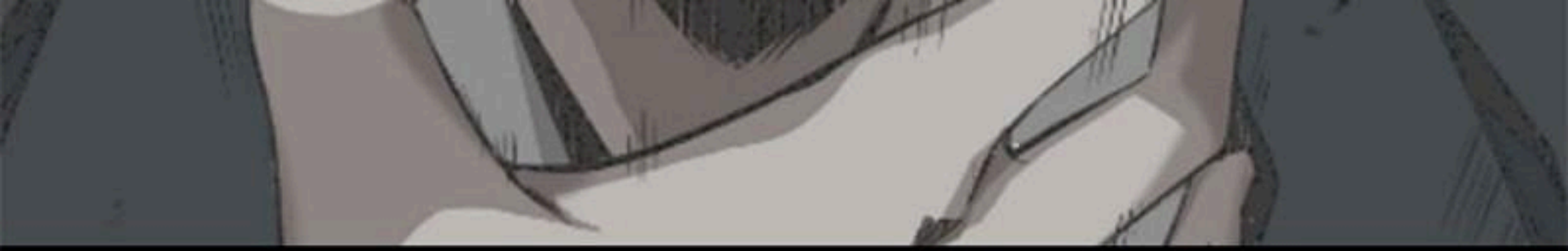
WHISH

A WISH?

IN STORIES LIKE THESE, THERE'S USUALLY A REWARD AT THE VERY END.

THOSE WHO HAVE
ADAPTED TO THIS WORLD
ALL SUFFER THROUGH IT
IN THEIR OWN WAY.

SOME BECOME MAD...



...OTHERS BECOME ZEALOTS,...

...AND SOME...

...BECOME IRRATIONALLY OPTIMISTIC.

YES,
YOU'RE
RIGHT.

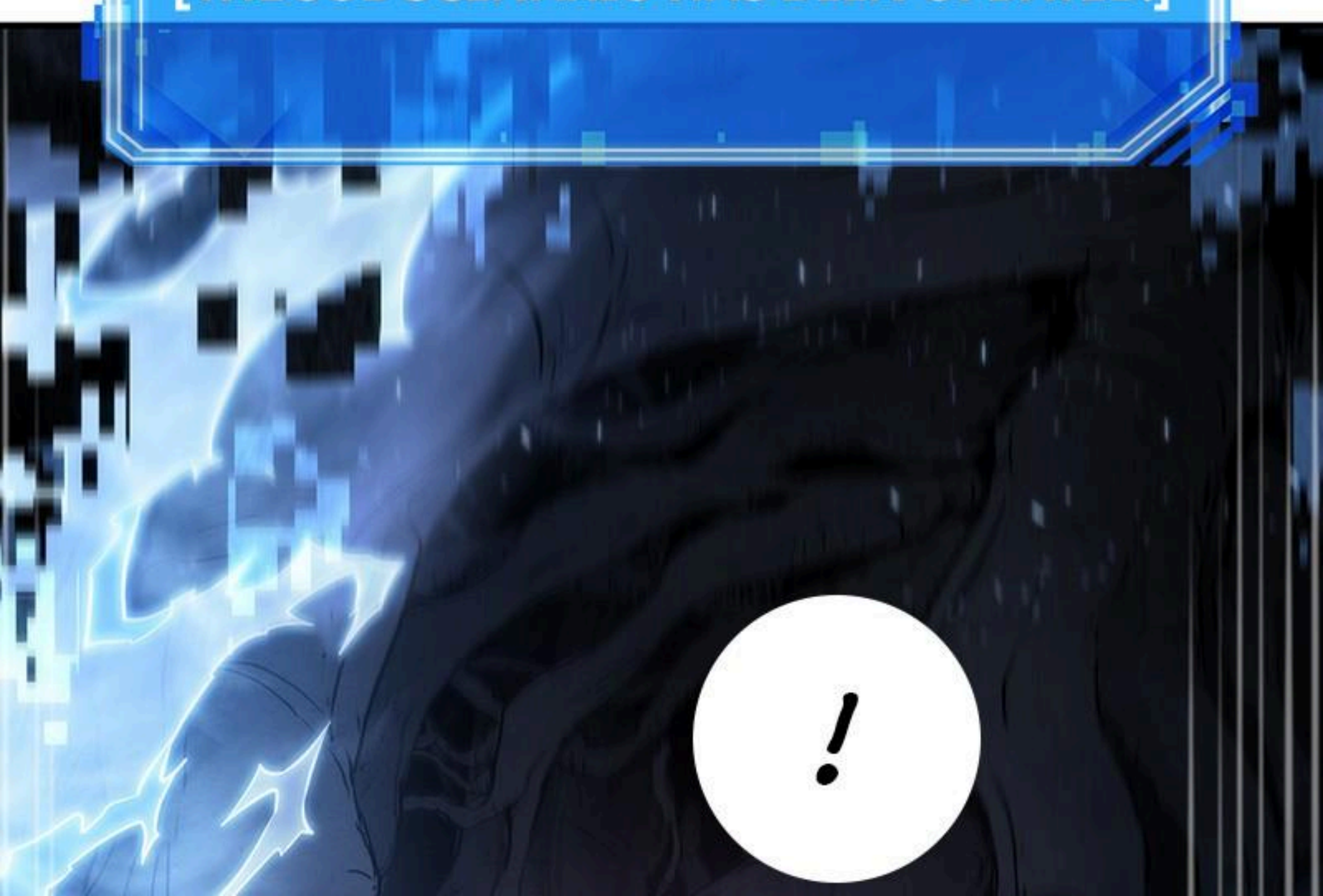
I'M LUCKY THAT WE'RE IN THE DARK.
GILYEONG CAN'T SEE MY EXPRESSION RIGHT NOW.

YOU CAN POINT FINGERS AT ME ALL YOU WANT. I AM A DESPICABLE GROWN-UP...

VIP

...AND THE KID HAS DECIDED TO LIVE ON IN THIS WORLD.

[THE SUB SCENARIO HAS BEEN UPDATED.]



SCRATCH

SCRATCH

[YOU HAVE ENTERED THE *GROUND RATS' TREASURE TROVE.*]

SCRATCH

SCRATCH

DOKJA!
THIS IS--

SCRATCH

SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH

SHUSH.
WAIT.

TREASURE'S
NOT THE ONLY

THING THEY STORE IN THERE.

SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH

GROWL

GRRR
SHRIEK

SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH

SCRA SCRATCH

THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT, SANGAH!

THIS VOICE...!
MY FAULT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

I-IF YOU HADN'T GOTTEN ON THE SUBWAY, I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN DRAGGED INTO ANY OF THIS!
WHAT DOES ME GETTING ON THE SUBWAY HAVE TO DO WITH ANYTHING?

T-THAT'S... BECAUSE YOU ALWAYS COMMUTE ON YOUR BICYCLE...

WAIT.

ARE YOU THE ONE WHO STOLE MY BIKE?!

D-DIDN'T I SAY I WOULD GIVE YOU A RIDE HOME?!

YOU SHOULD LEARN TO ACCEPT THE KINDNESS OF OTHERS FOR ONCE!

ANSWER ME. DID YOU STEAL MY BIKE?

NO WONDER.
I WAS WONDERING WHY HE WAS ON THE SUBWAY AND NOT IN HIS Z-CLASS BENX...

[THE CONSTELLATION, ***DEMONIC JUDGE OF FIRE***, DESPISES MYEONGOH HAN.]

YES!
IT WAS ME!
I DID IT, SO
WHAT?!

WHY ARE
YOU SHOUTING
AT ME?

YOU TOOK MY BIKE! THAT'S STEALING!
"STEALING"? YOU'RE RIGHT! BUT NONE OF THIS WOULD'VE HAPPENED IF YOU'D JUST GONE HOME WITH ME!

[THE CONSTELLATION, *PRISONER OF THE GOLDEN HEADBAND*, HAS GROWN TIRED OF THE PETTY ARGUMENT.]

WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?!

I WASN'T QUITE READY BUT...

THERE! I'VE SAID IT! AND THERE'S

AND THERE'S PLENTY MORE WHERE THAT CAME FROM!

...I GUESS IT CAN'T BE HELPED.

LISTEN, SANGAH.
DID I EVER MAKE A MOVE ON YOU?
SHREK

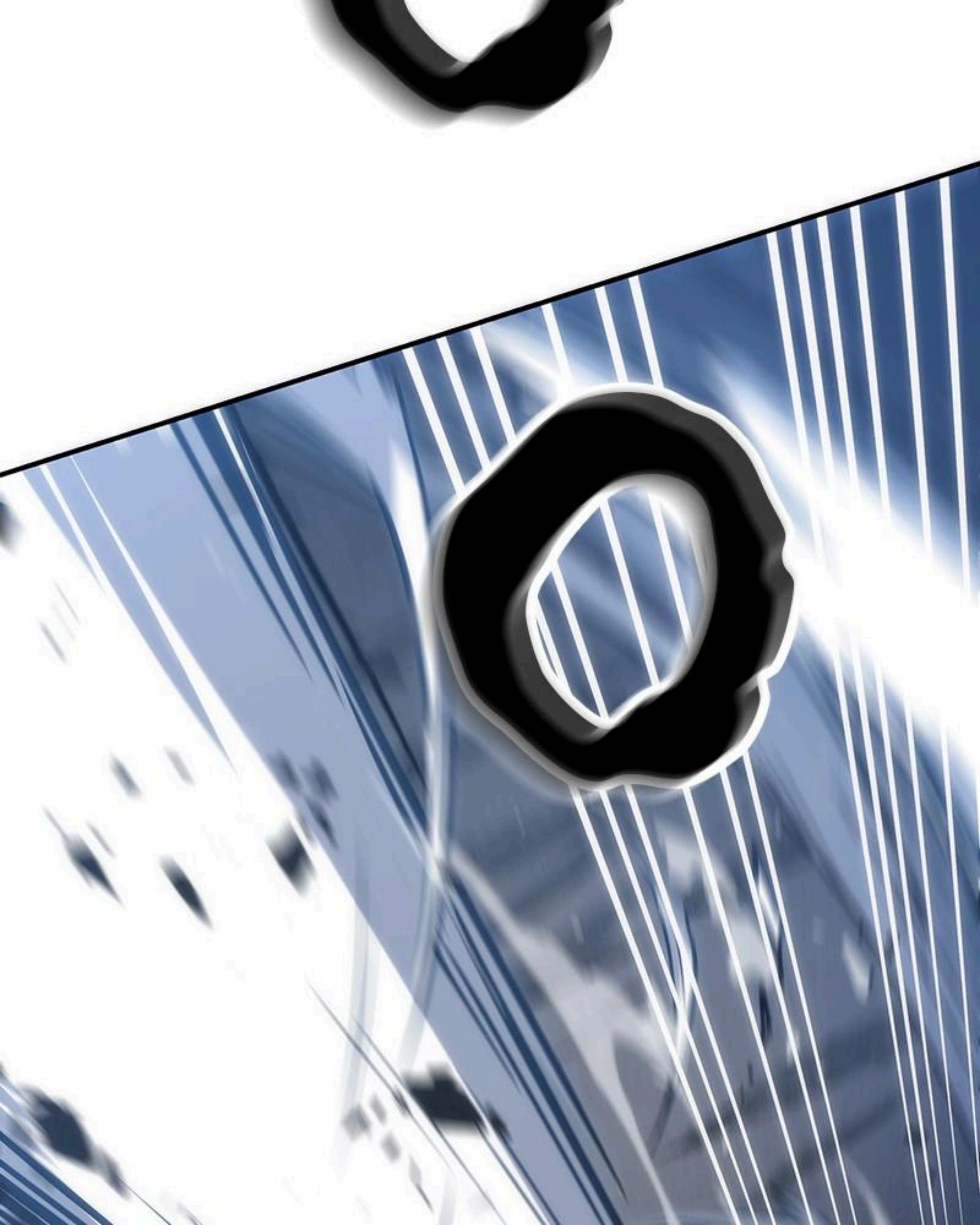
SHRIEK

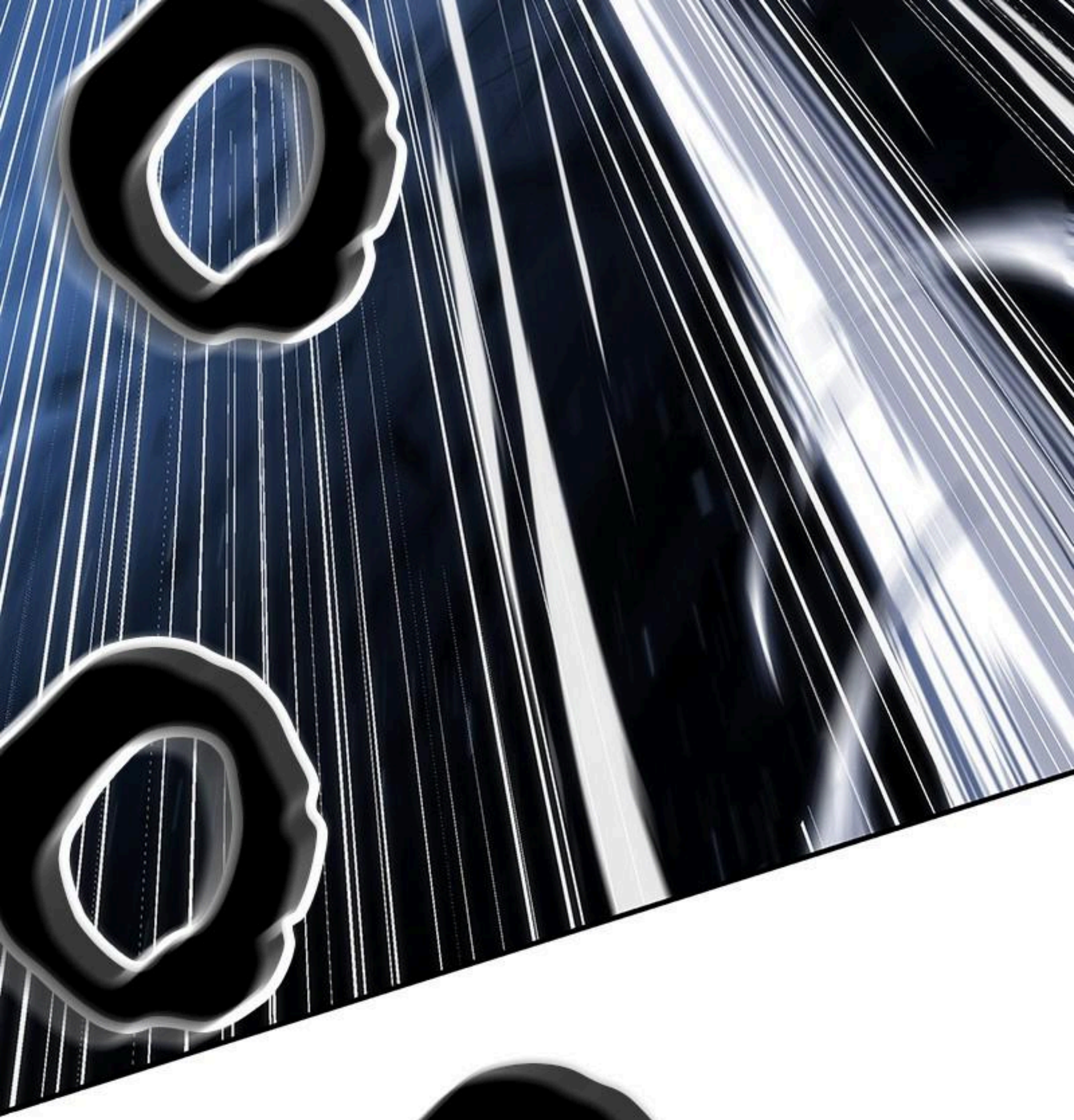
IT'S NOT LIKE I ASKED YOU OUT OR ANYTHING!

SHRIEK

I JUST WANTED TO DRIVE YOU HOME OUT OF THE GOODNESS OF MY HEART!

YOU KEPT REJECTING MY OFFER SO I--

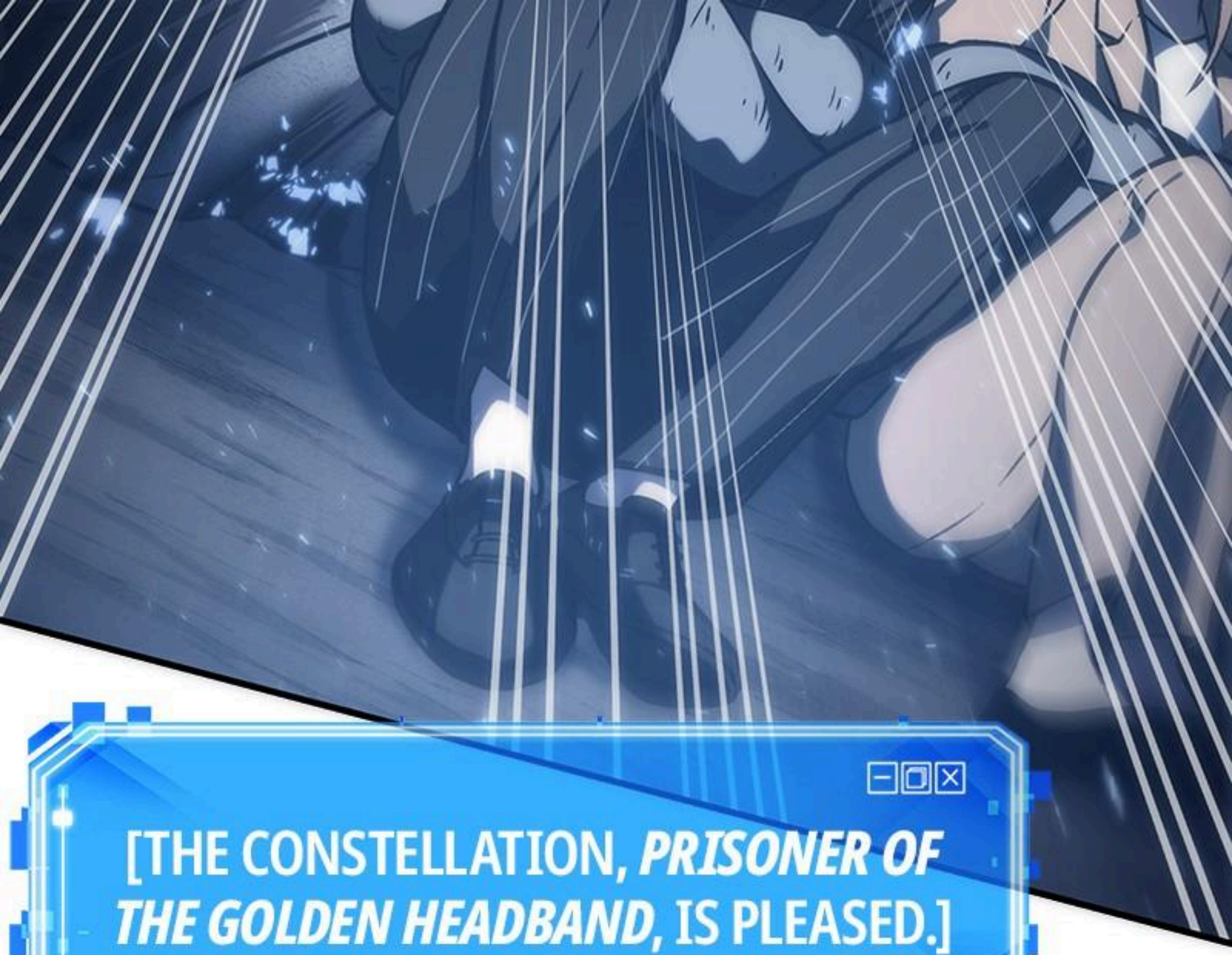




S

H

AAAAAH!



[THE CONSTELLATION, ***PRISONER OF THE GOLDEN HEADBAND***, IS PLEASED.]

[YOU HAVE BEEN GIFTED 100 COINS.]

W-WHAT
WAS THAT?

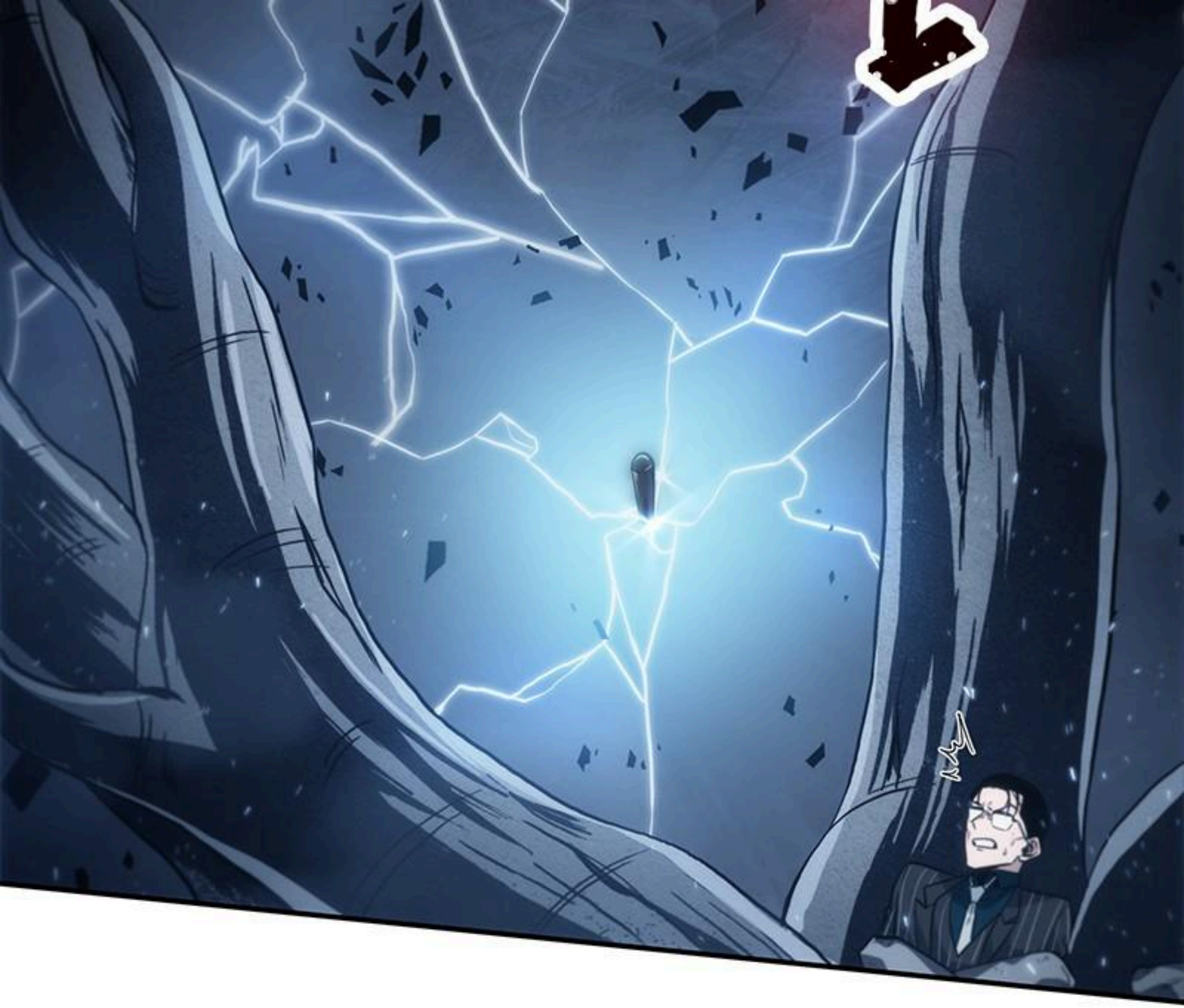
DOKJA!

IT'S COMING.

CRACK

6화

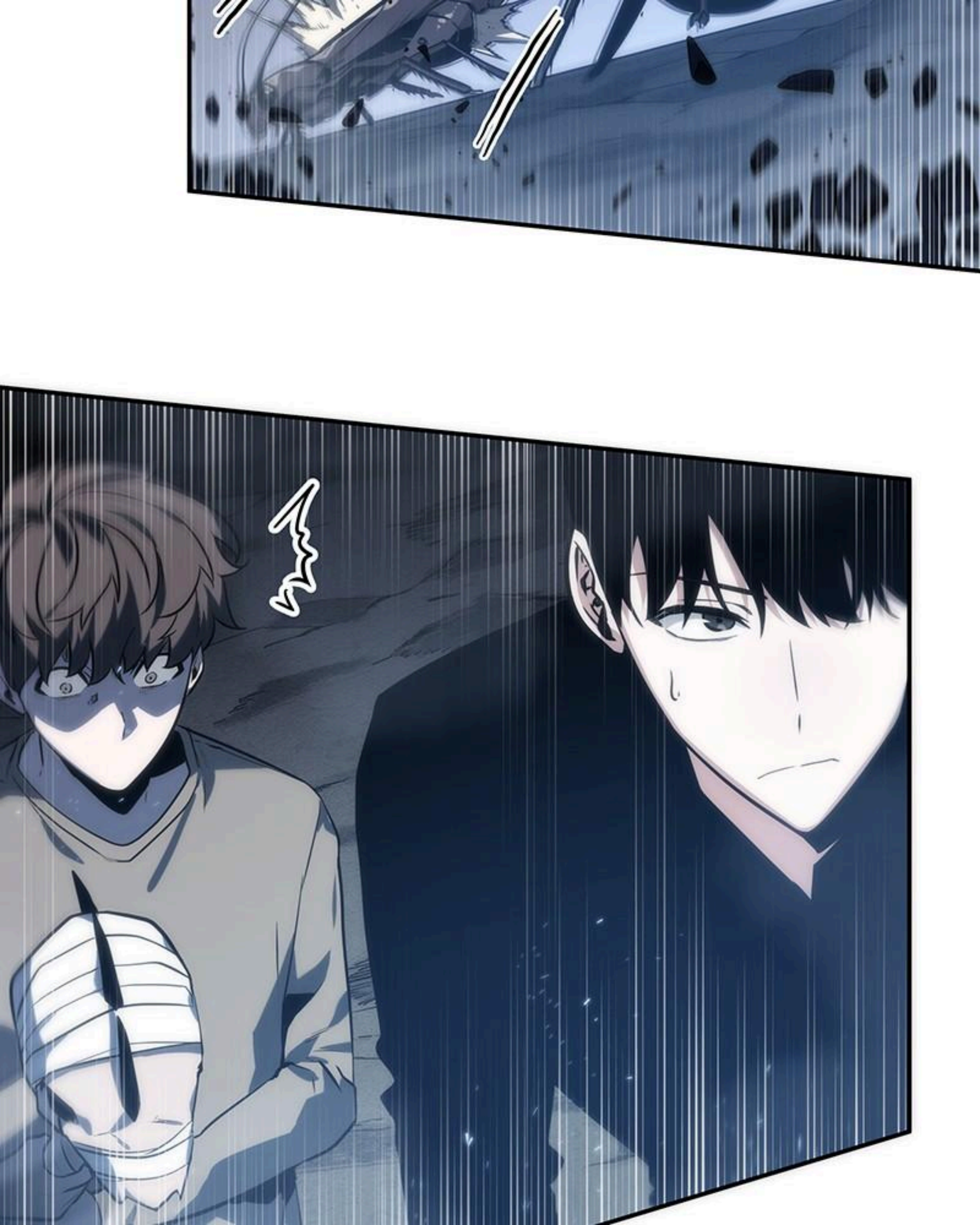
반격



CRACK

!!

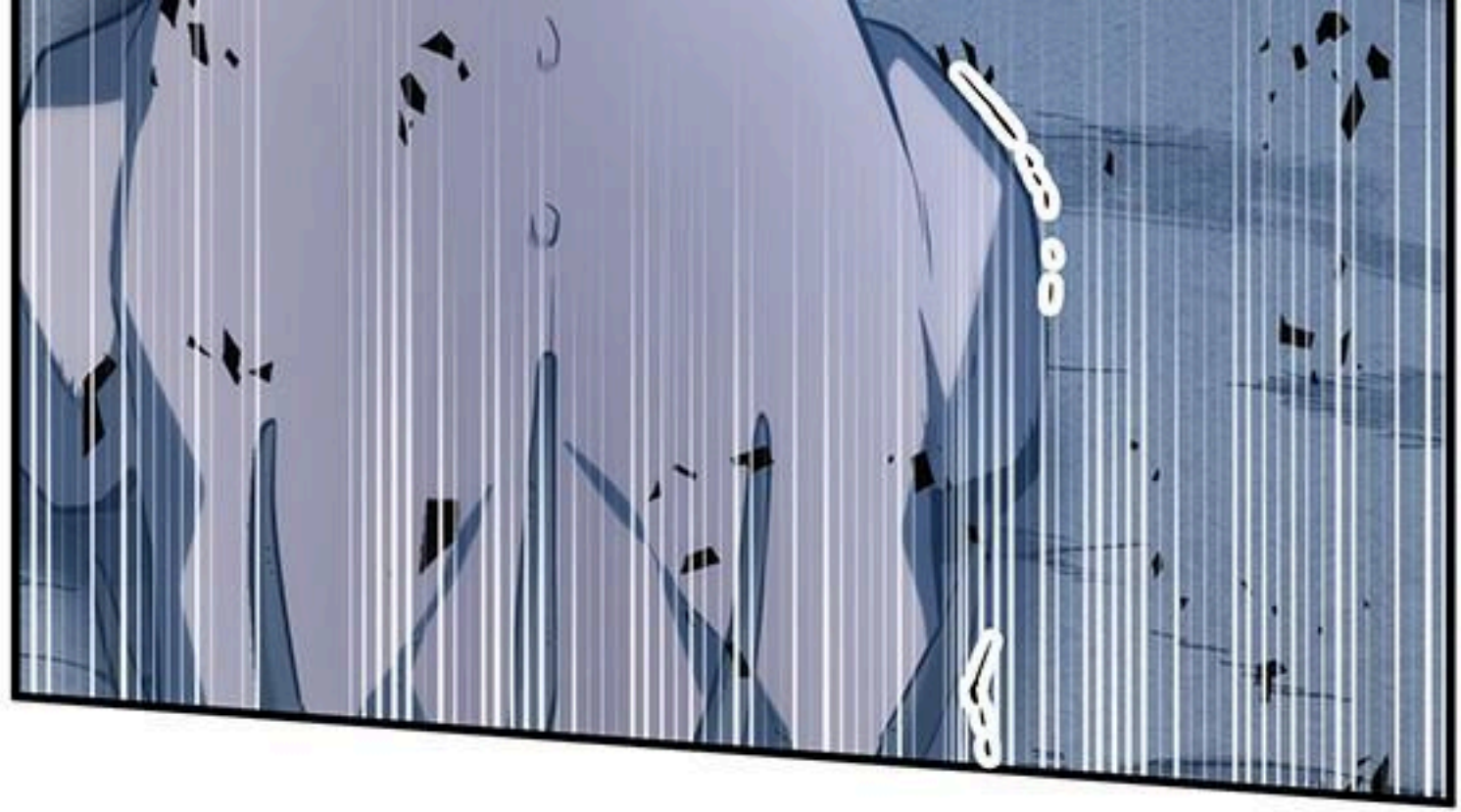
SMACK
THUD



CRACKLE

HACK

HACK



EVEN CONSIDERING THAT THIS IS WITHIN THE DEPTHS OF THE *DARK FOLD*...

...BLACK ETHER OVERFLOWS TO THE POINT OF MANIFESTING BLACK FLAMES...

IN THE NUCLEUS OF THE *DARK ROOT*.

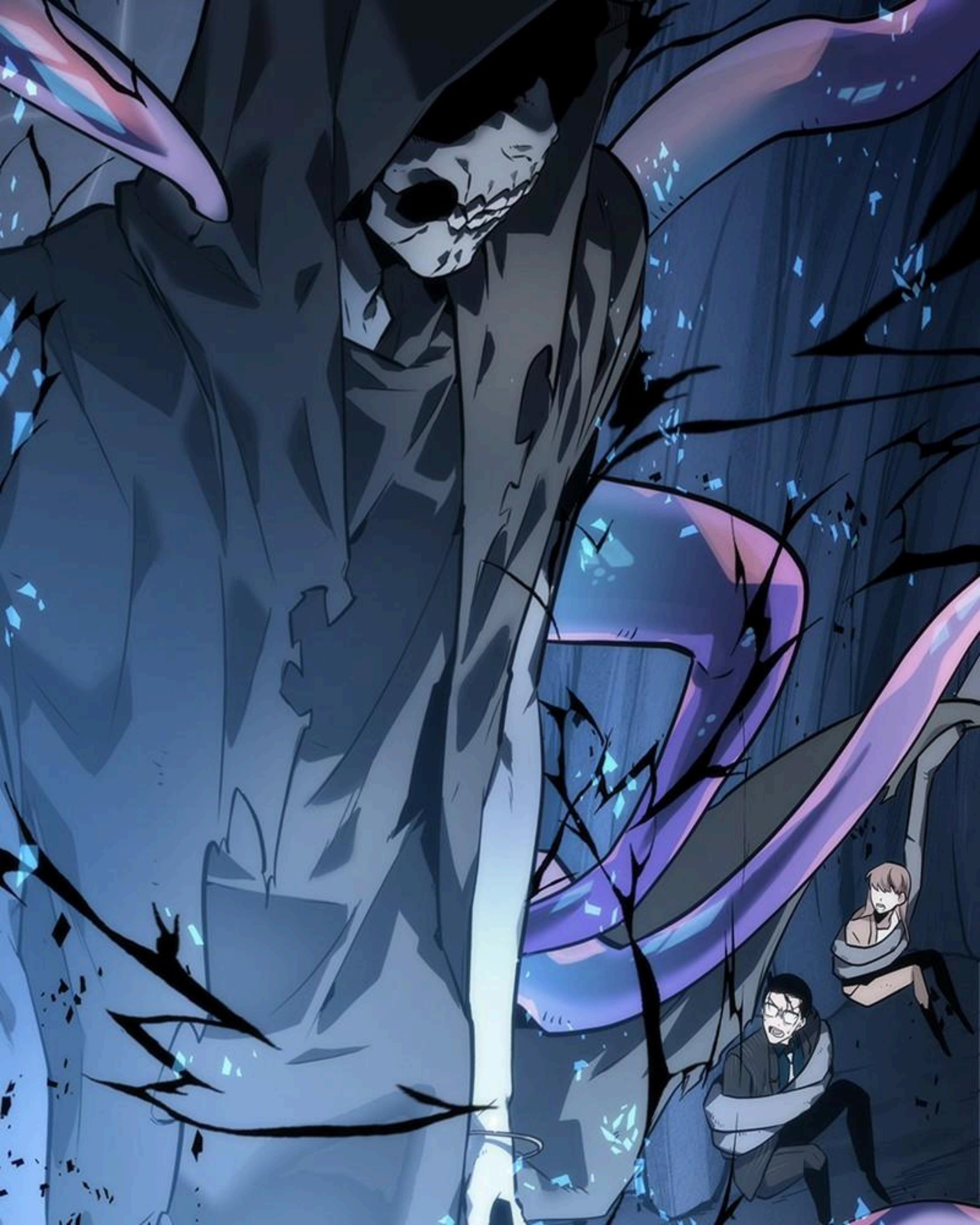
FLARE

AND HE APPEARS WHEREVER THERE IS A *DARK ROOT.*

CRACK

CR

A-
CKLE



DING

[THE *WARDEN OF THE DARK* HAS APPEARED!]

SHRIEK

DING

[THE SUB SCENARIO HAS BEEN UPDATED!]

DING

[THE SUB SCENARIO,
DEFEAT THE WARDEN, HAS BEGUN!]

UGH.
DOKJA, I...
IT'S OKAY.
GO AHEAD.

ALL THE INSECTS THAT WERE CONNECTED TO GILYEONG EXPLODED.

HE MUST HAVE TAKEN CONSIDERABLE MENTAL DAMAGE FROM THAT.

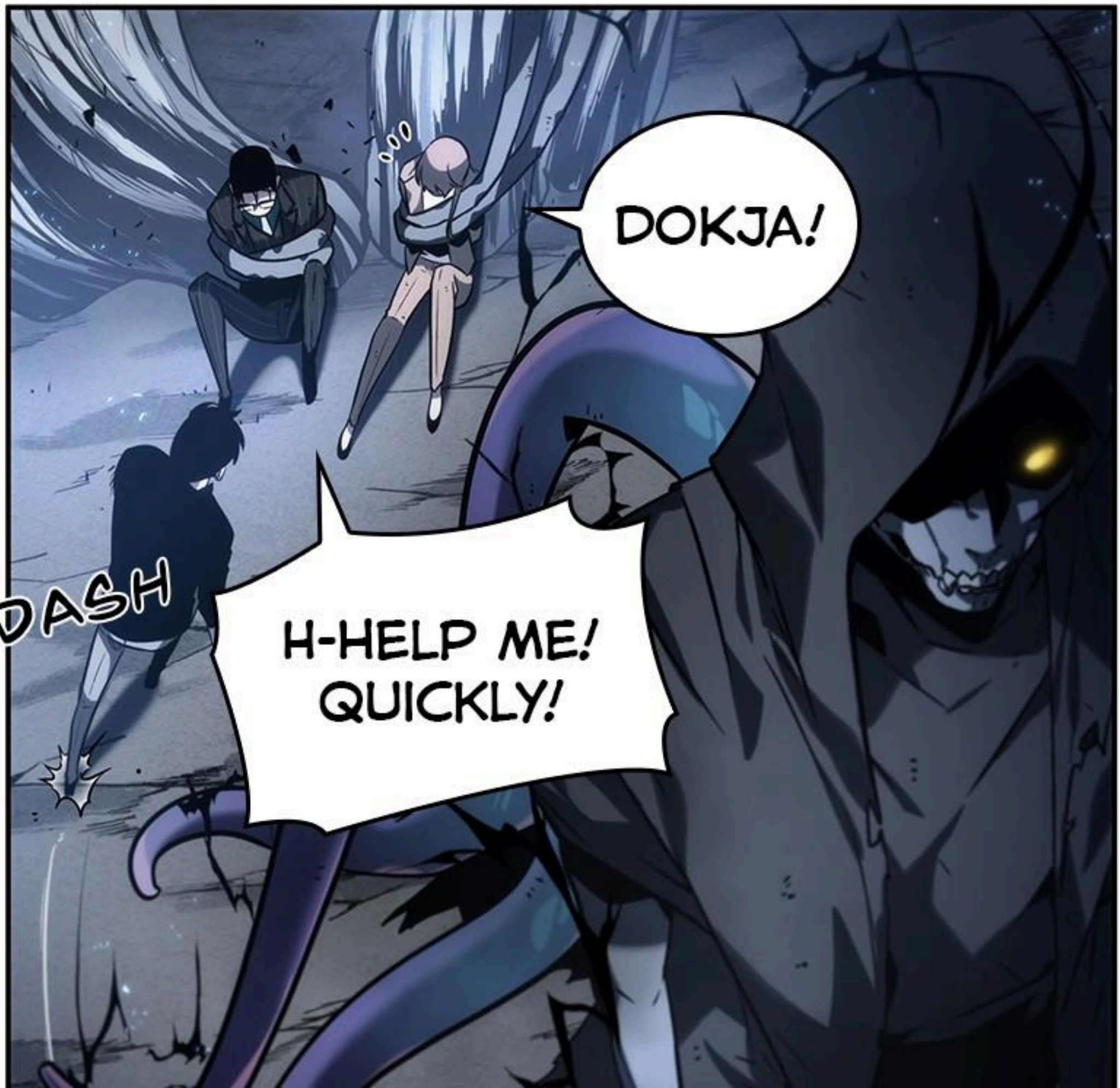
BARF

GILYEONG.
HOW MANY MORE TIMES CAN YOU USE [INTERSPECIES COMMUNICATION]?

MAYBE... ONCE OR TWICE MORE.

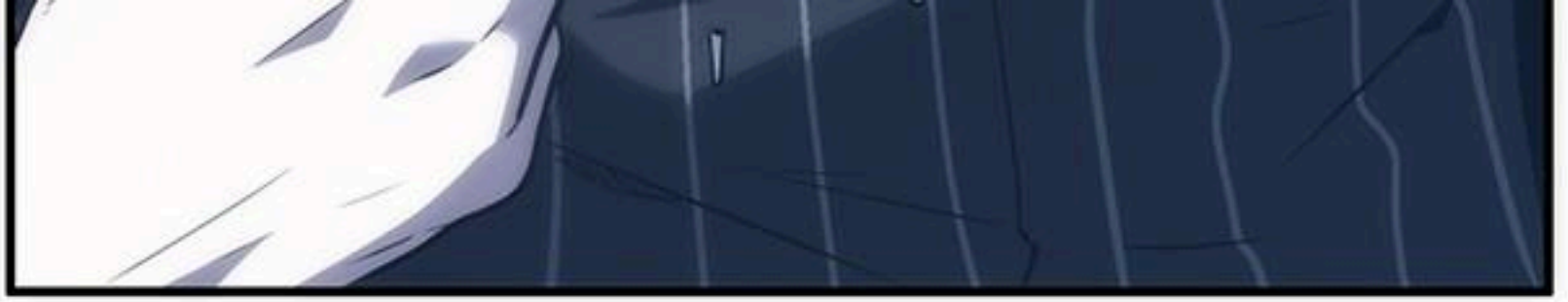
HUFF

HUFF
ALL RIGHT.
REST HERE
FOR A WHILE
THEN.


DOKJA!
...
DASH
H-HELP ME!
QUICKLY!

DASH

SLASH



SLASH

I ONLY CUT THE STEM AND THE BLADE'S ALREADY BLUNT.

SPARK

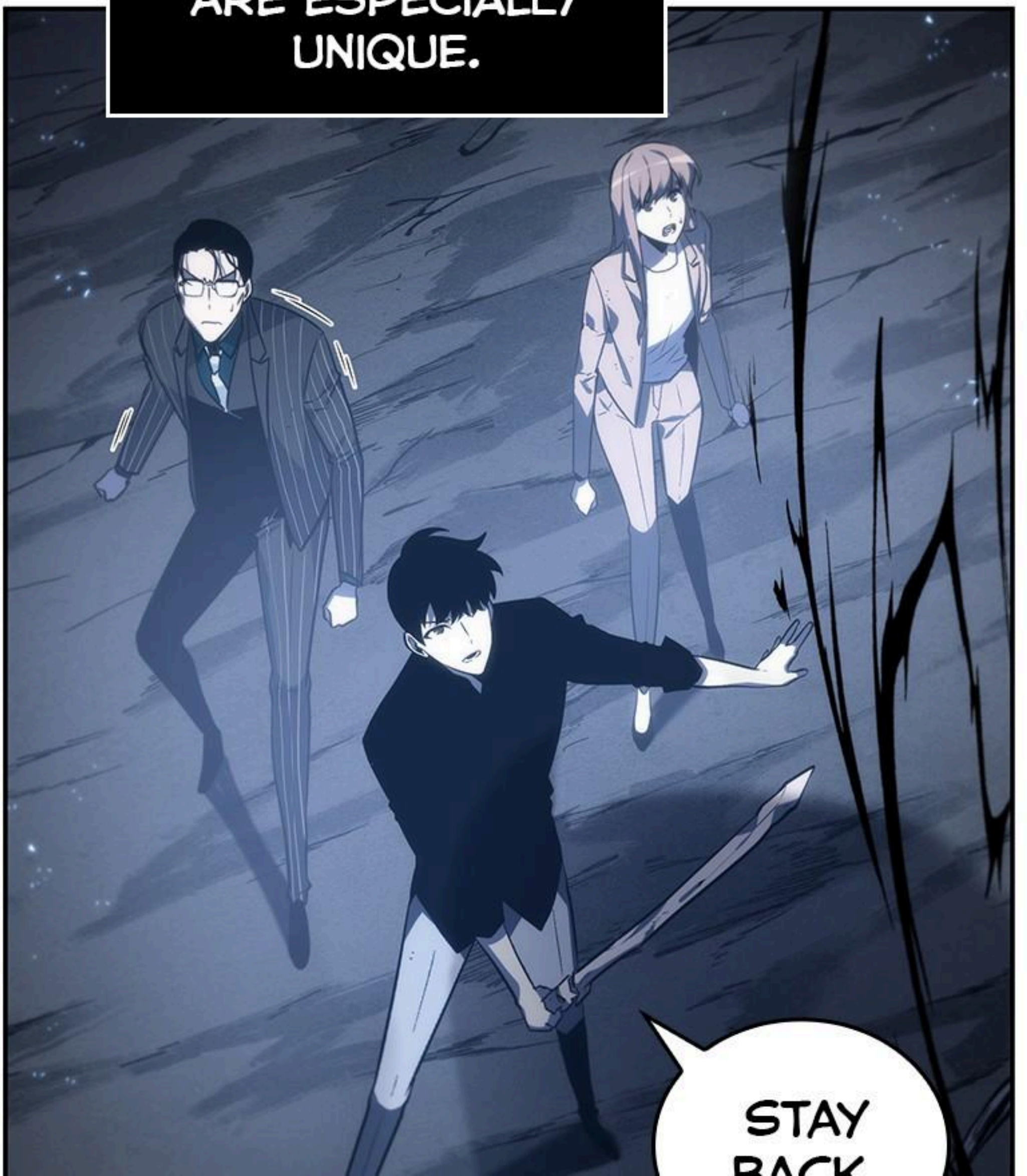
SO THIS IS THE POWER OF THE DEMONIC SPECIES.

TIER 7
DEMONIC
SPECIES

WARDEN OF
THE DARK

OF ALL
THE MONSTERS

THE MONSTERS, THOSE OF THE DEMONIC SPECIES ARE ESPECIALLY UNIQUE.



THE *TREASURES* COLLECTED BY GROUND RATS ARE LIKE A SACRIFICE THEY MAKE TO THE DEMONIC SPECIES.

EVEN IF THEY'RE AT THE SAME LEVEL, THE DEMONIC SPECIES HAVE THE UPPER HAND OVER OTHER MONSTERS.

[THE *WARDEN OF THE DARK* HAS RECEIVED THE DEMON KING'S BLESSING.]

...

...

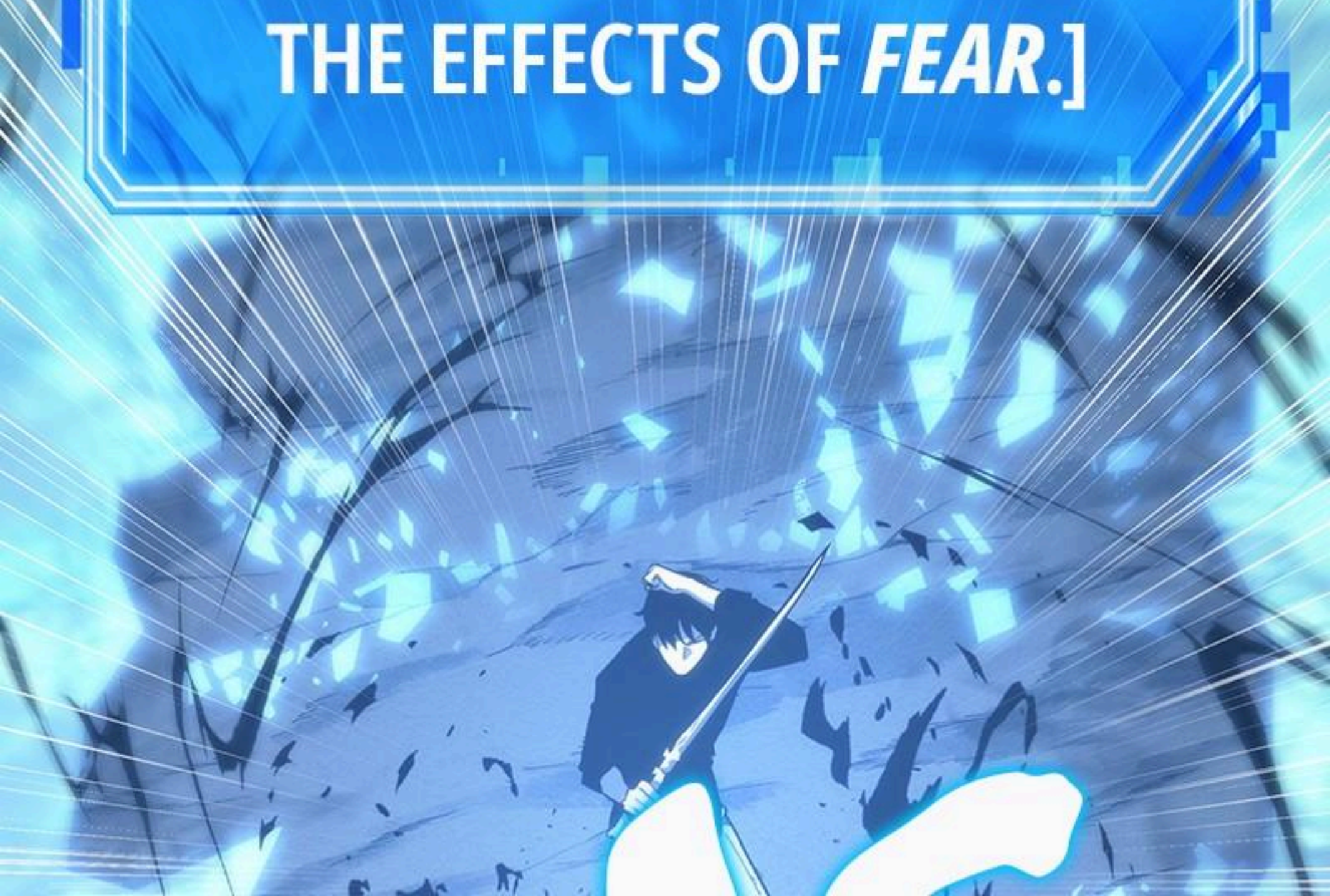
THIS ISN'T LOOKING GOOD.
I WANTED TO AVOID FIGHTING IT AT ALL COSTS.

KAMUN,
DER, ETUR.

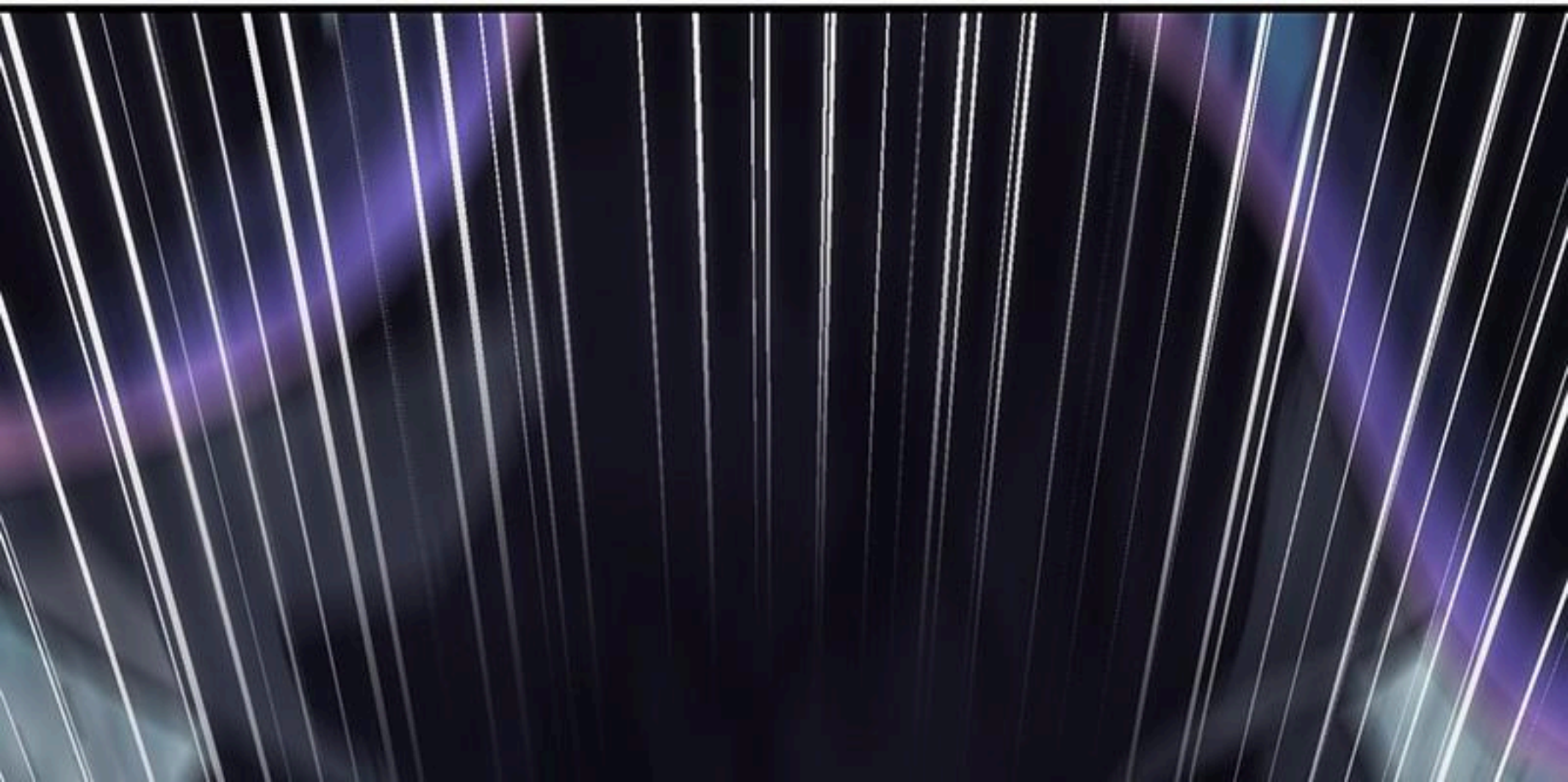
I DON'T EVEN UNDERSTAND WHAT IT'S SAYING.

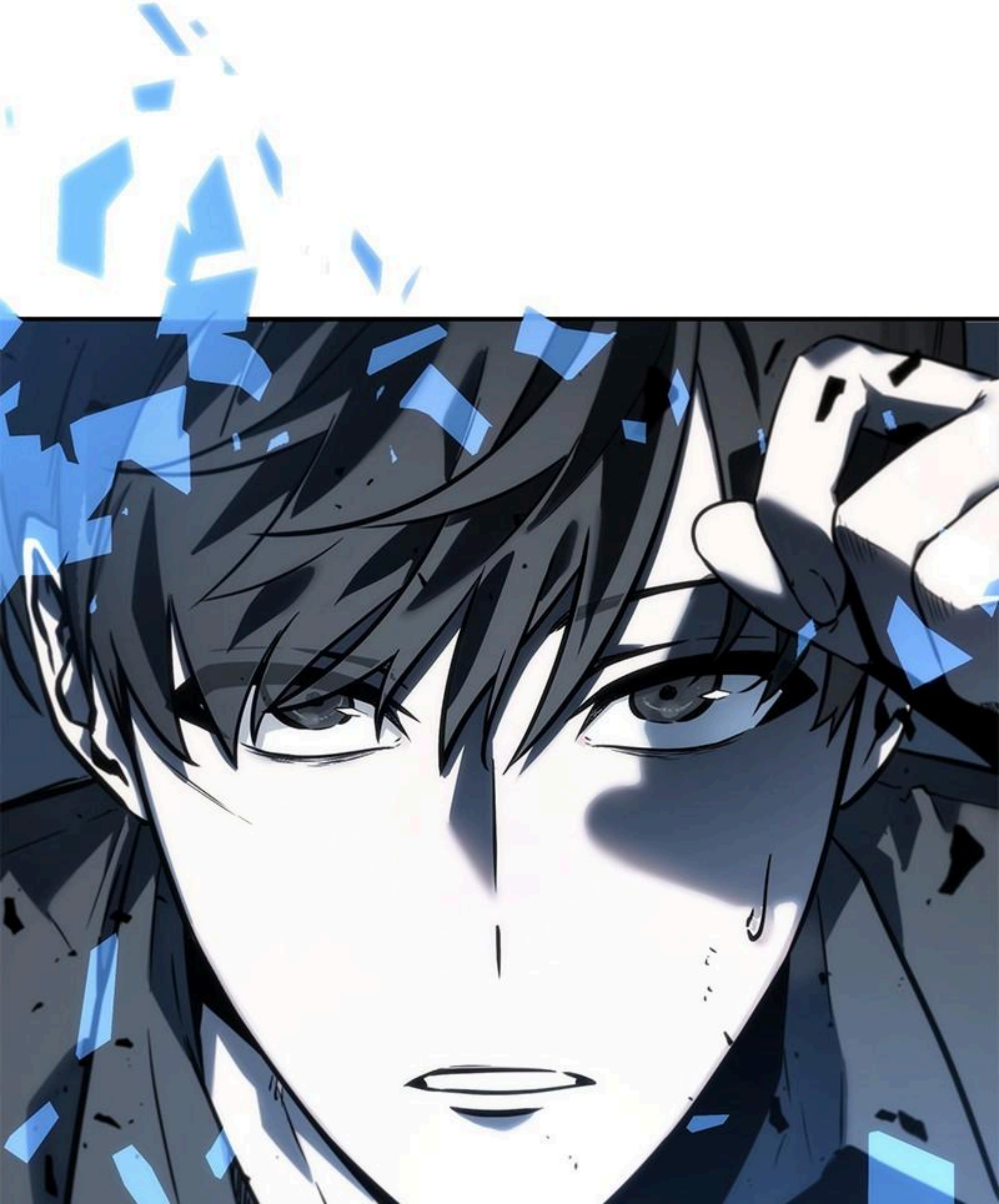
[THE *WARDEN OF THE DARK* SPEWS AN AURA OF *FEAR*.]

[PERSONAL SKILL,
THE FOURTH WALL,
HAS NULLIFIED MOST OF
THE EFFECTS OF *FEAR*.]



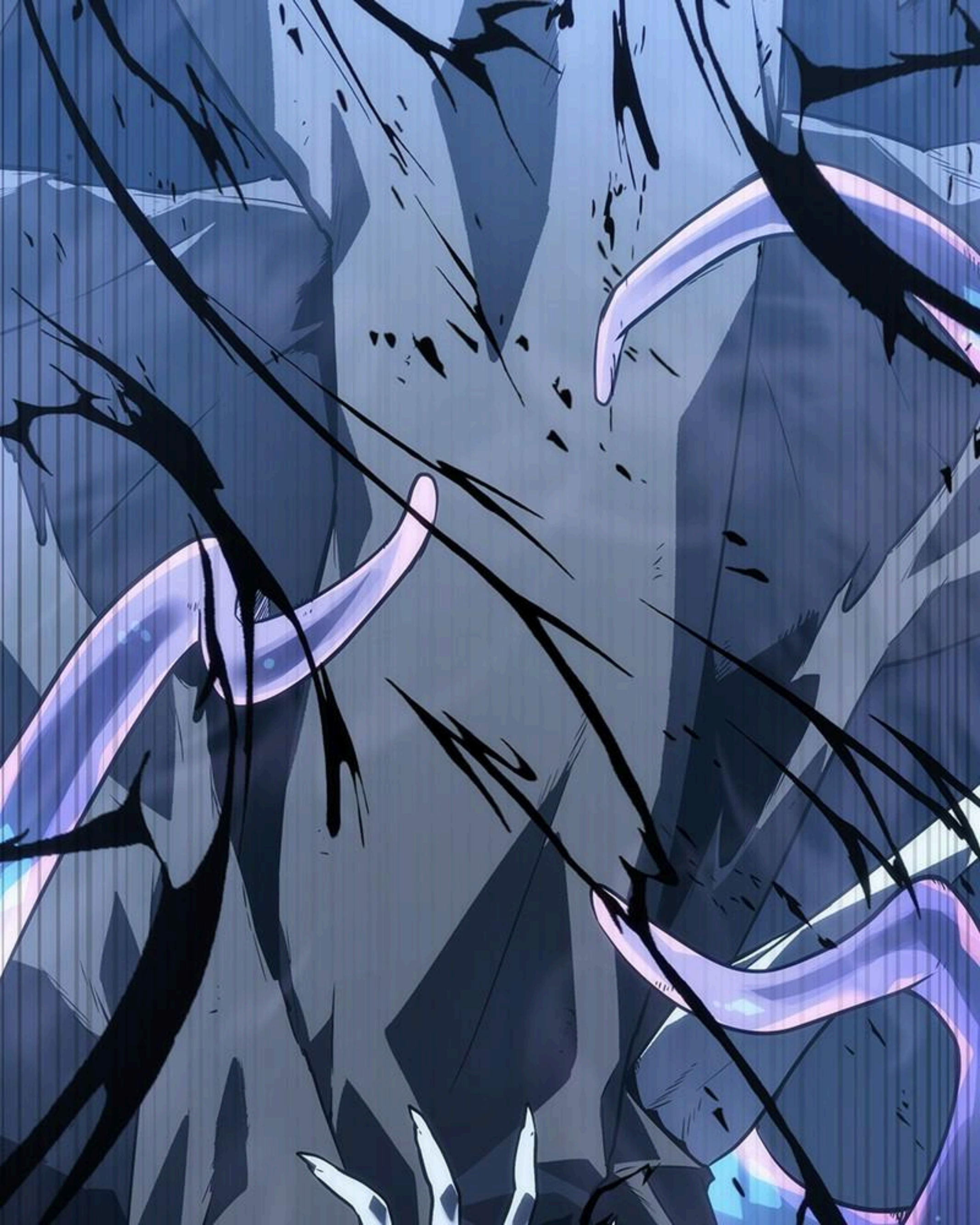
CRASH





GAAAW...

ETUR...!



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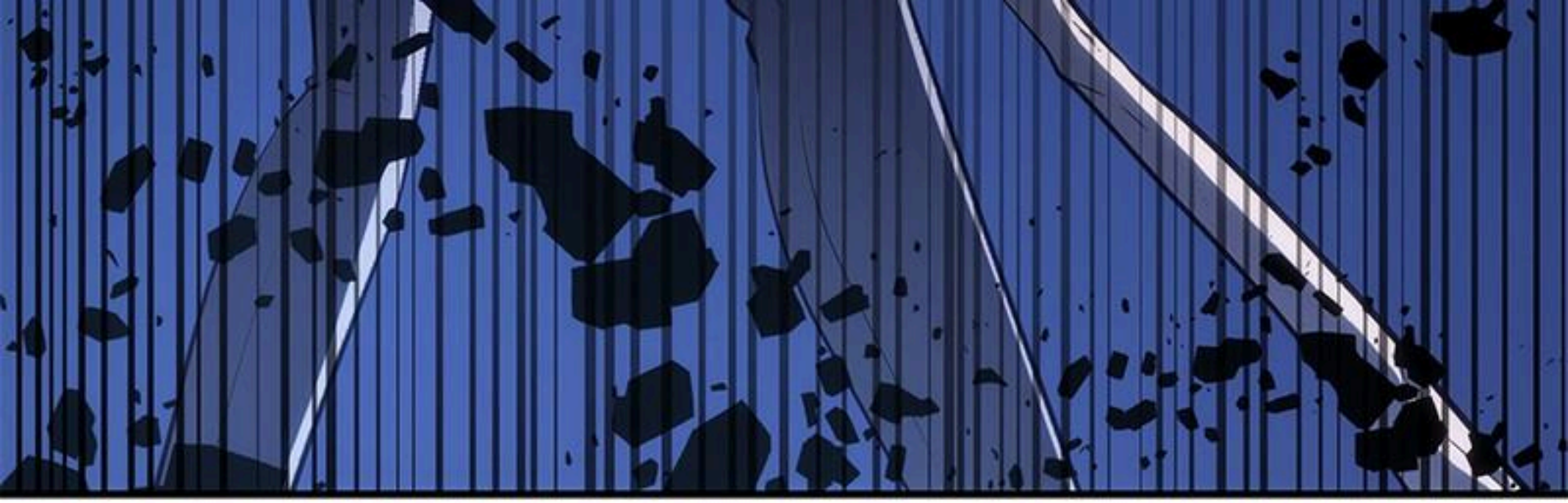
Published by L7

GAAAW...

ETUR...!

[THE *WARDEN OF THE DARK*
HAS RECEIVED
THE DEMON KING'S BLESSING.]



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Art by Sleepy-C | Adapted by UMI | Original Story by Singshong

Art by Sleepy-C | Adapted by UMI | Original story by Shigshong

Episode 21

Chapter 5

Warden of the Dark

Part 3

FLARE

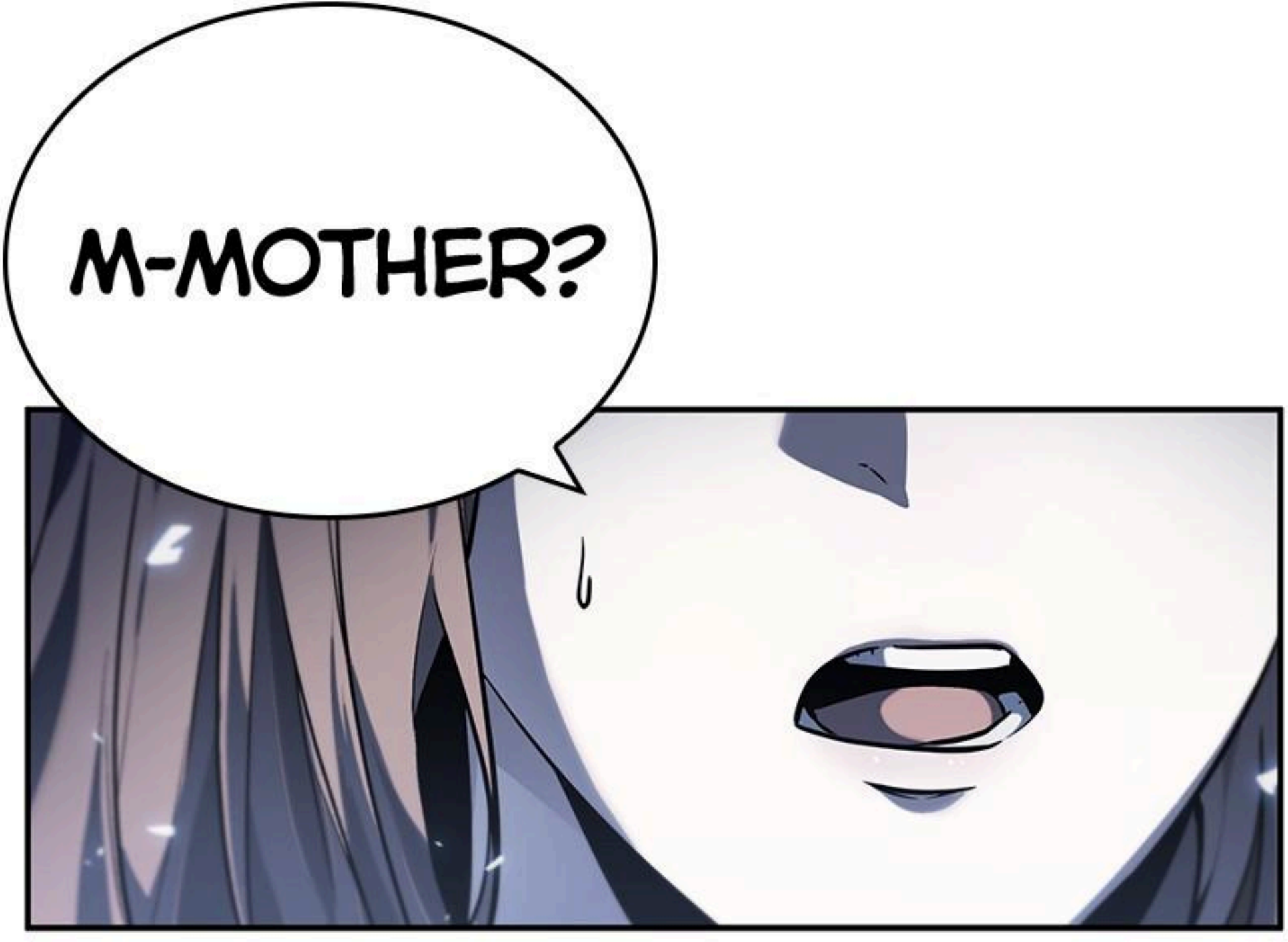
DAMN IT. THIS ISN'T LOOKING GOOD.

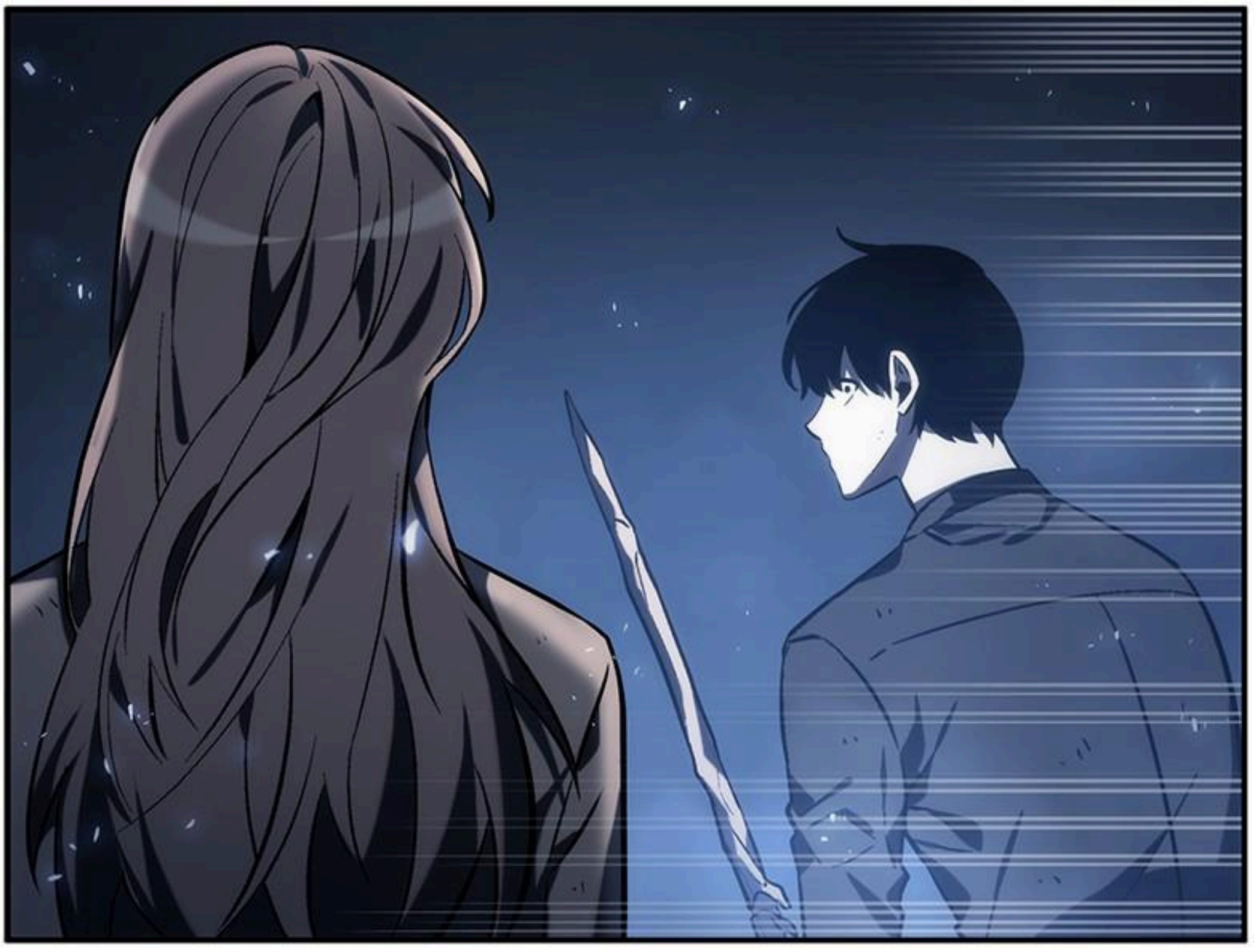
HUFF

HUFF

I WANTED TO AVOID FIGHTING IT AT ALL COSTS.

ETOR!
SQUEAK


M-MOTHER?



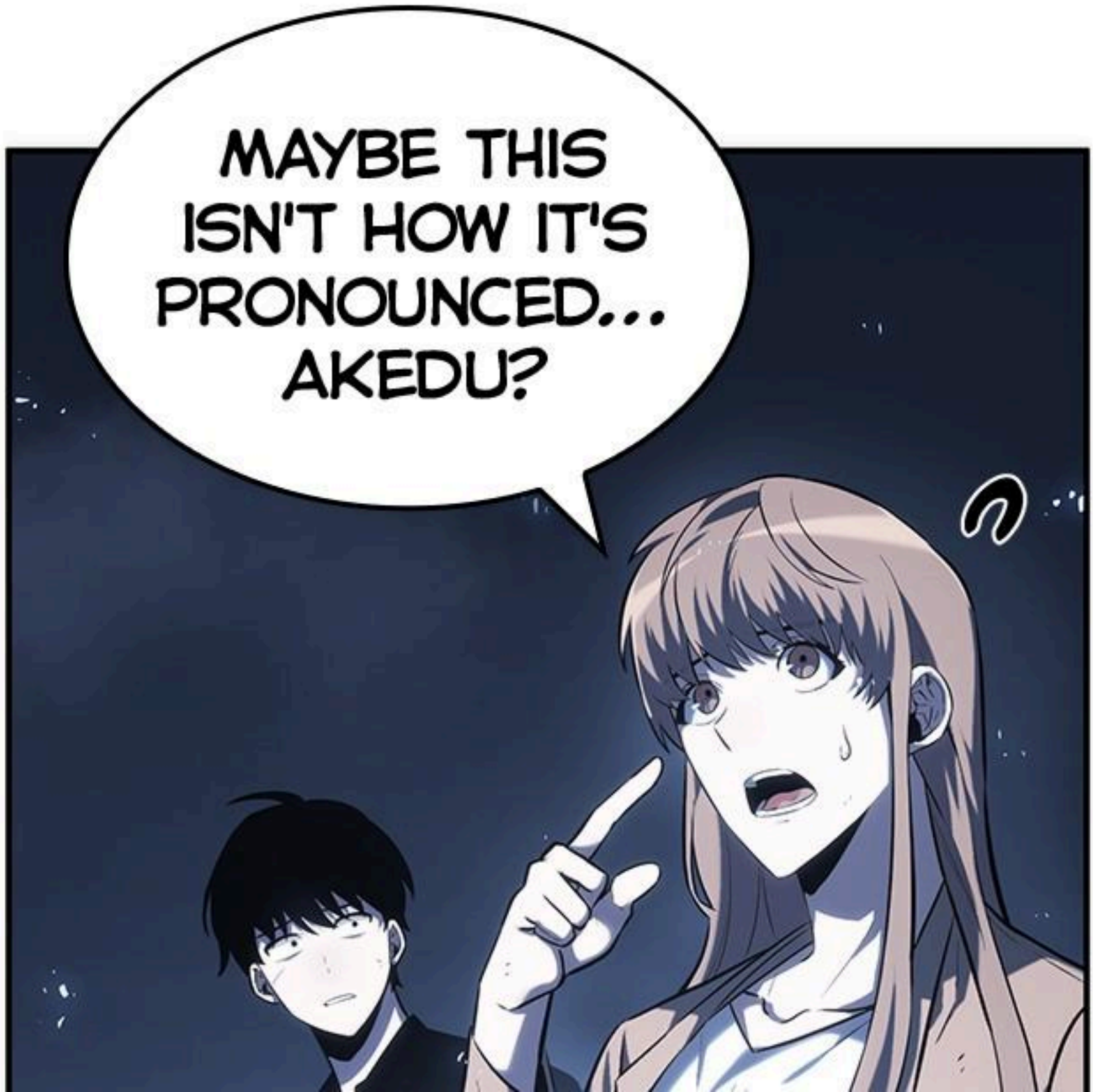
I TOLD YOU TO GET BACK, SANGAH!

WELL, IT'S JUST THAT THE MONSTER SAID *MOTHER*...

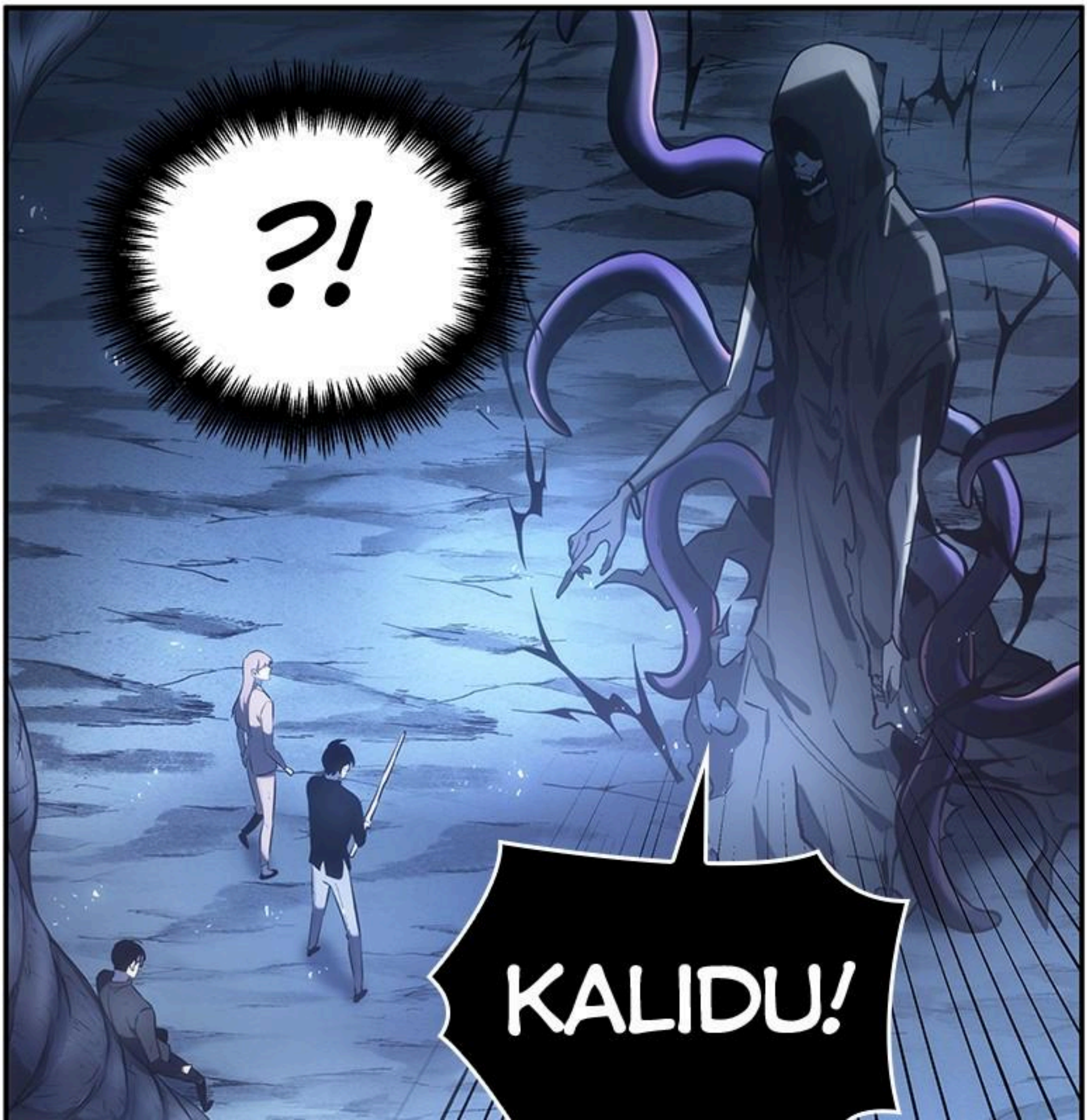
SO... K-KARDU, EMIREN?

WHAT ARE YOU STILL DOING HERE?

HALT


MAYBE THIS ISN'T HOW IT'S PRONOUNCED... AKEDU?

KALIDU!


?!
KALIDU!

MY GOSH...
SHE'S FLUENT IN SPANISH AND NOW EVEN THE LANGUAGE OF THE DEMONIC SPECIES?

HER TALENTS `SHINE EVEN IN AN APOCALYPSE...

D-DID I SAY IT RIGHT?

[CHARACTER *SANGAH YU* HAS ACTIVATED THE SKILL, *INTERPRETATION LV. 3*.]

WHAT IS IT SAYING ANYWAY?

WELL... IT'S ASKING US...

I SUPPOSE I CAN HEAR YOU OUT.

TO **BE A MOTHER.**

KALIDU!

A M-MOTHER? I'M NOT EVEN MARRIED YET!

KALIDU!

W-WHY SHOULD I BE A MOTHER?! I SHOULD BE THE FATHER!

TOGGLE

WHO
ARE

THE LIST

!

GULP

GULP

MMPH!

SO THAT'S WHAT IT MEANT WHEN IT SAID "MOTHER."

DASH

YOU DON'T HAVE PLANS TO GIVE BIRTH ANYTIME SOON, DO YOU?

OF COURSE NOT!

THE DEMONIC SPECIES IMPREGNATE OTHER SPECIES WITH THEIR OFFSPRING.

WHAT IT'S DOING TO MYEONGOH IS--

GWAAH
KALIDU!!

1K

마지막

ИКАК

UGH!

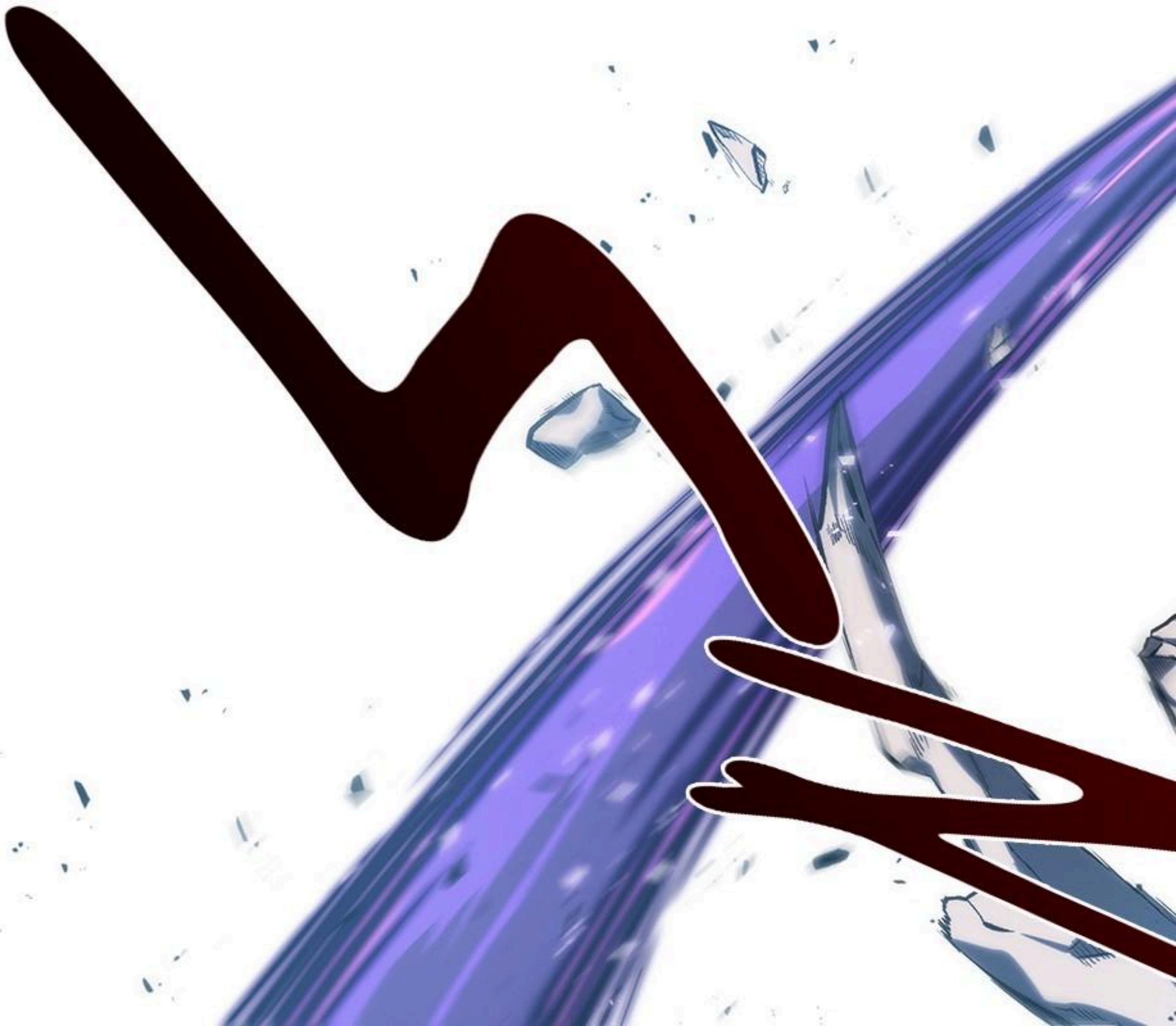
DOKJA!

ATTACK

THUD

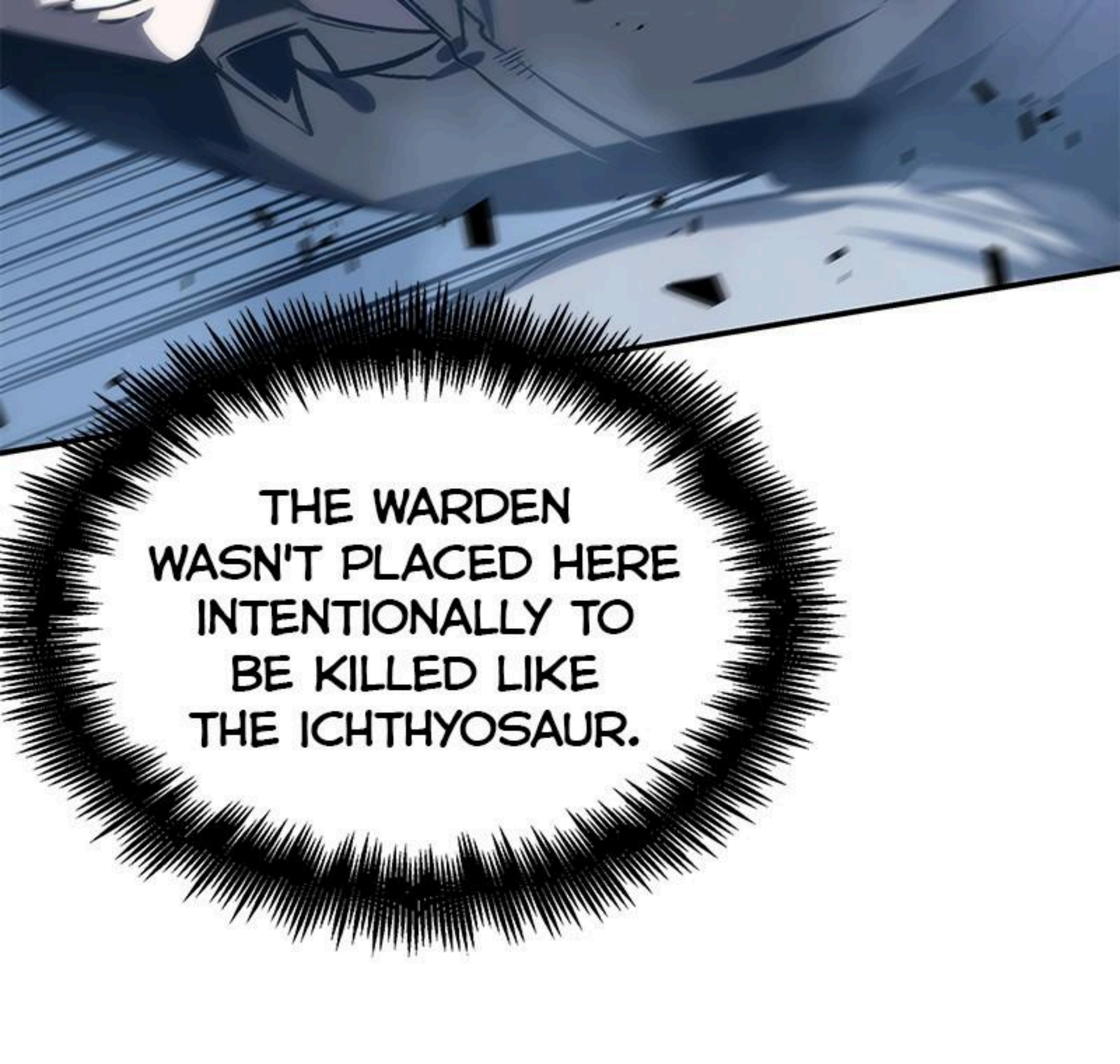
CRACK

CRACK



WHOOSH

DAMN IT.
IT BROKE.


THE WARDEN WASN'T PLACED HERE INTENTIONALLY TO BE KILLED LIKE THE ICHTHYOSAUR.

CRASH

I HAVE NO CHANCE OF BEATING HIM.

WHAT

MY PLAN WAS TO GRAB THE TREASURE...
...AFTER WAITING FOR THE WARDEN TO LEAVE

TO LEAVE.

MYEONGOH, THAT IDIOT...

BUT I ALWAYS HAVE A PLAN B, JUST IN CASE.

CRASH

DOKKAEBI! YOU'RE WATCHING, RIGHT?!

W-WHAT?

CRACKLE

H-HOW DID YOU KNOW?

CRACKLE

THERE YOU ARE.

I SHOULD'VE RECEIVED AN ITEM IN THE MAIL BY NOW. I NEED YOU TO GIVE THAT TO ME.

HEHE. THAT IS NONE OF MY BUSINESS.

B-BIHYEONG IS IN CHARGE OF THAT.

CRACKLE

CRACKLE

CRACKLE

CRASH

BUT YOU'RE HERE TO DO BIHYEONG'S JOB.

CAN'T YOU SEE THAT THE CONSTELLATIONS ARE ON EDGE BECAUSE OF WHAT'S HAPPENING?

YIKES!

[THE CONSTELLATION, *PRISONER OF THE GOLDEN HEADBAND*, KEEPS BROWBEATING THE DOKKAEBI, *BIRYU*!]
[THE CONSTELLATION, *DEMONIC JUDGE OF FIRE*, IS THREATENING THE DOKKAEBI, *BIRYU*!]

A-ALL RIGHT. BUT IT'S JUST THIS ONCE.

I'M ONLY DOING THIS BECAUSE IT MIGHT MAKE THINGS INTERESTING!

FLASH

[AN ITEM
HAS ARRIVED FROM
THE AUCTION HOUSE.]

CRASH

CRASH

I'M GOING TO SELL THIS.
PUT IT UP FOR TRADE ON THE DOKKAEBI AUCTION HOUSE.

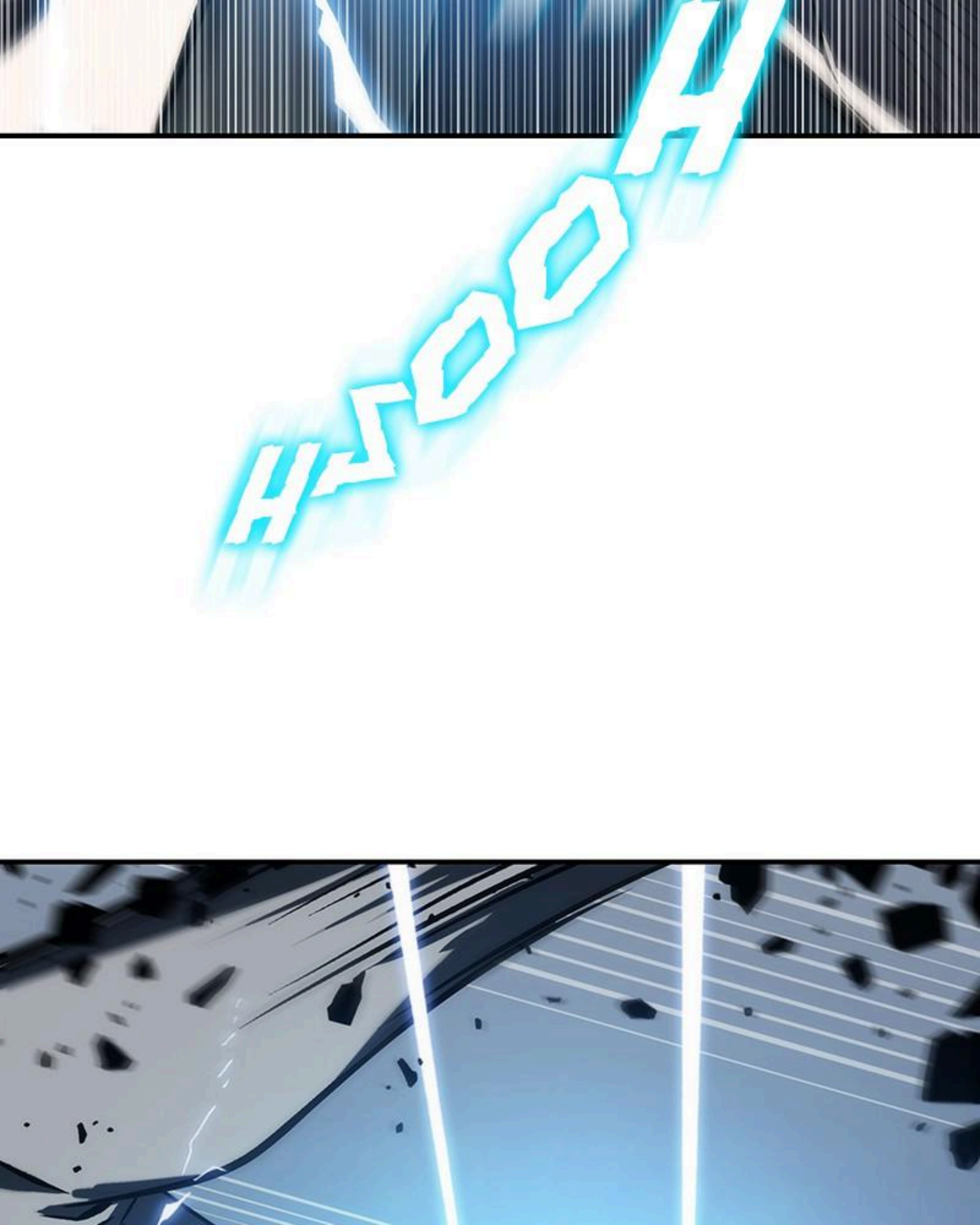
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS...

HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THAT?

AND I WON'T TRADE THIS WITH ANYTHING ELSE BUT *BROKEN FAITH.*

[OBTAINED THE ITEM,
BROKEN FAITH.]

HAHH


HAOOA!

[YOU ARE EXEMPT FROM PAYING COMMISSION DUE TO

PAYING COMMISSION DUE TO YOUR CONTRACT.]

CRASH

HALT

...

KE.

HUFF

HUFF

PFFT.
C-CAN YOU EVEN
FIGHT WITH
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT?

T-THAT

THING...

...IS BROKEN.

A-AND
YOU WON'T BE
ABLE TO USE IT
UNLESS YOU HAVE
A SPECIFIC
SKILL.

[ITEM]

[BROKEN FAITH]

GRADE: D

I ALREADY KNOW THAT MUCH.

I WOULDN'T HAVE BOUGHT THIS IN THE FIRST PLACE IF I DIDN'T.

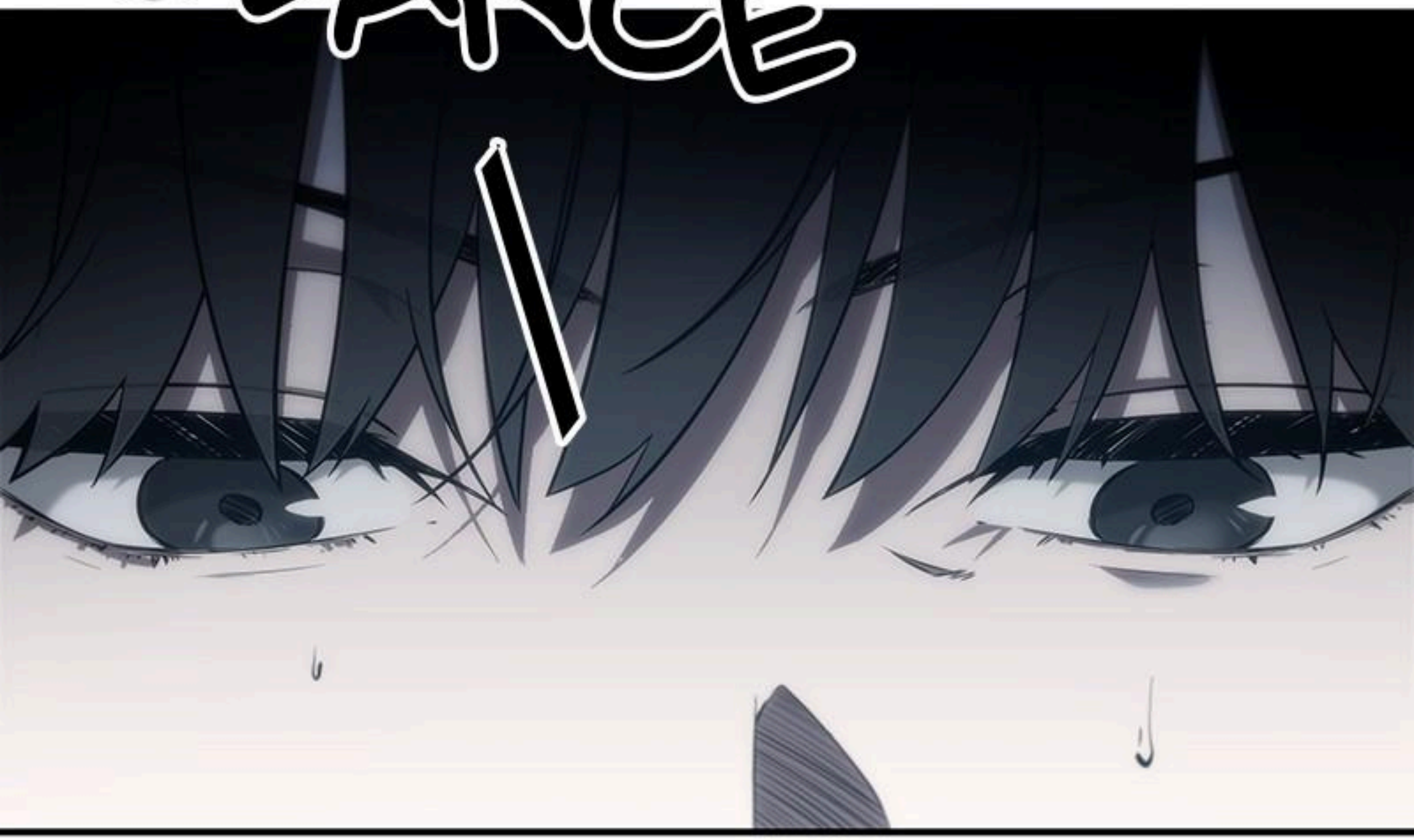
HAHAHA

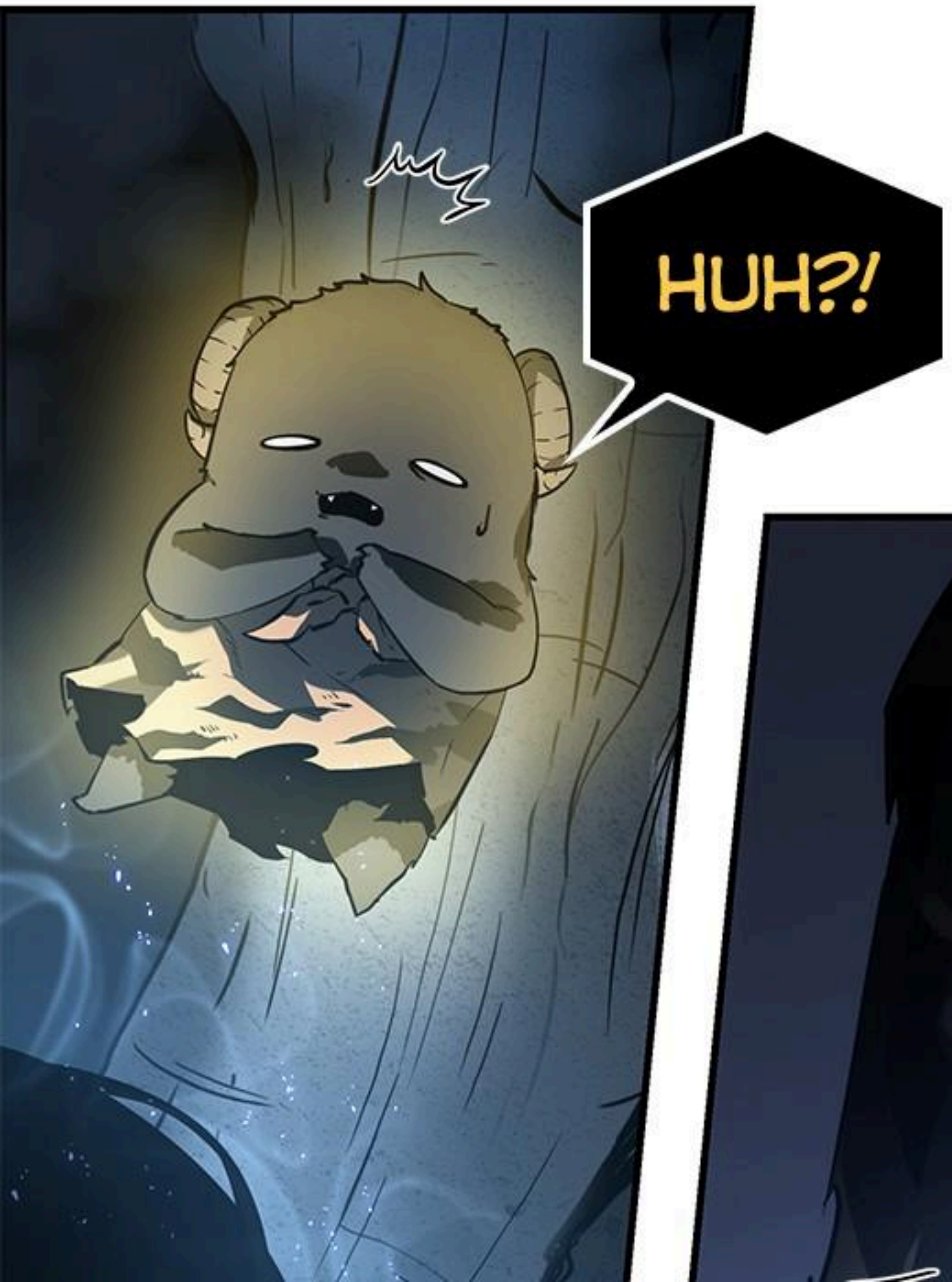
SIGH

[THE EQUIPPED ITEM
IS TOO WORN OUT TO USE.

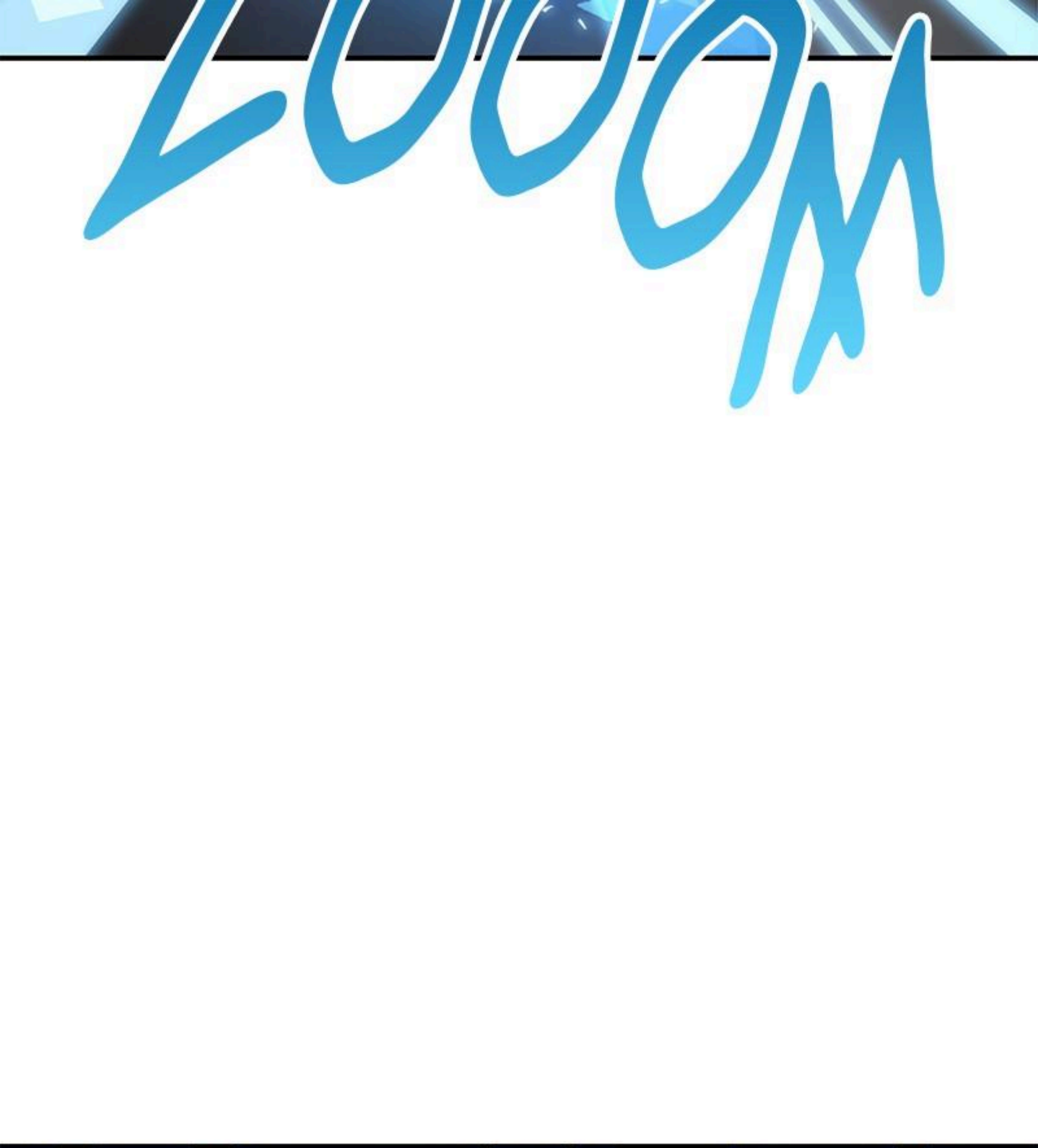
ITS DURABILITY IS TOO LOW
FOR IT TO BE EFFECTIVE.]

GLANCE 1




HUH?!

100


ZOOM

W-WHAT?!
H-HOW?!

I PURCHASED A SKILL FROM BIHYEONG...

AFTER I HUNTED THE ICHTHYOSAUR.

SEARCH *ARCH-DEMON'S EYEBALL.*

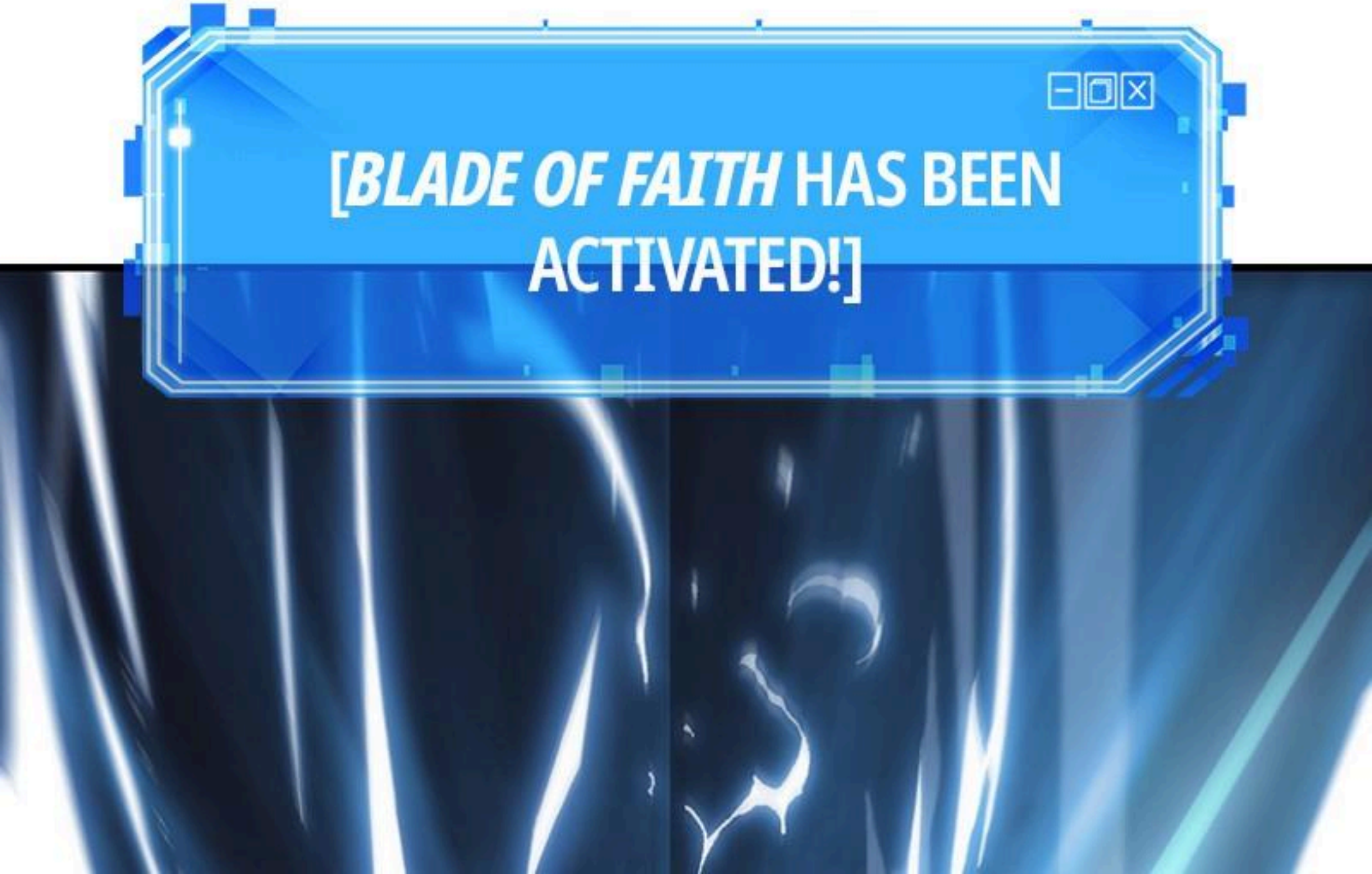
SEARCH

SEARCH
WHITE STAR
WEAPON AURA.
HOW DOES
HE KNOW ALL
THIS?!

[PERSONAL SKILL,
WHITE STAR WEAPON AURA,
ACTIVATED!]

WH

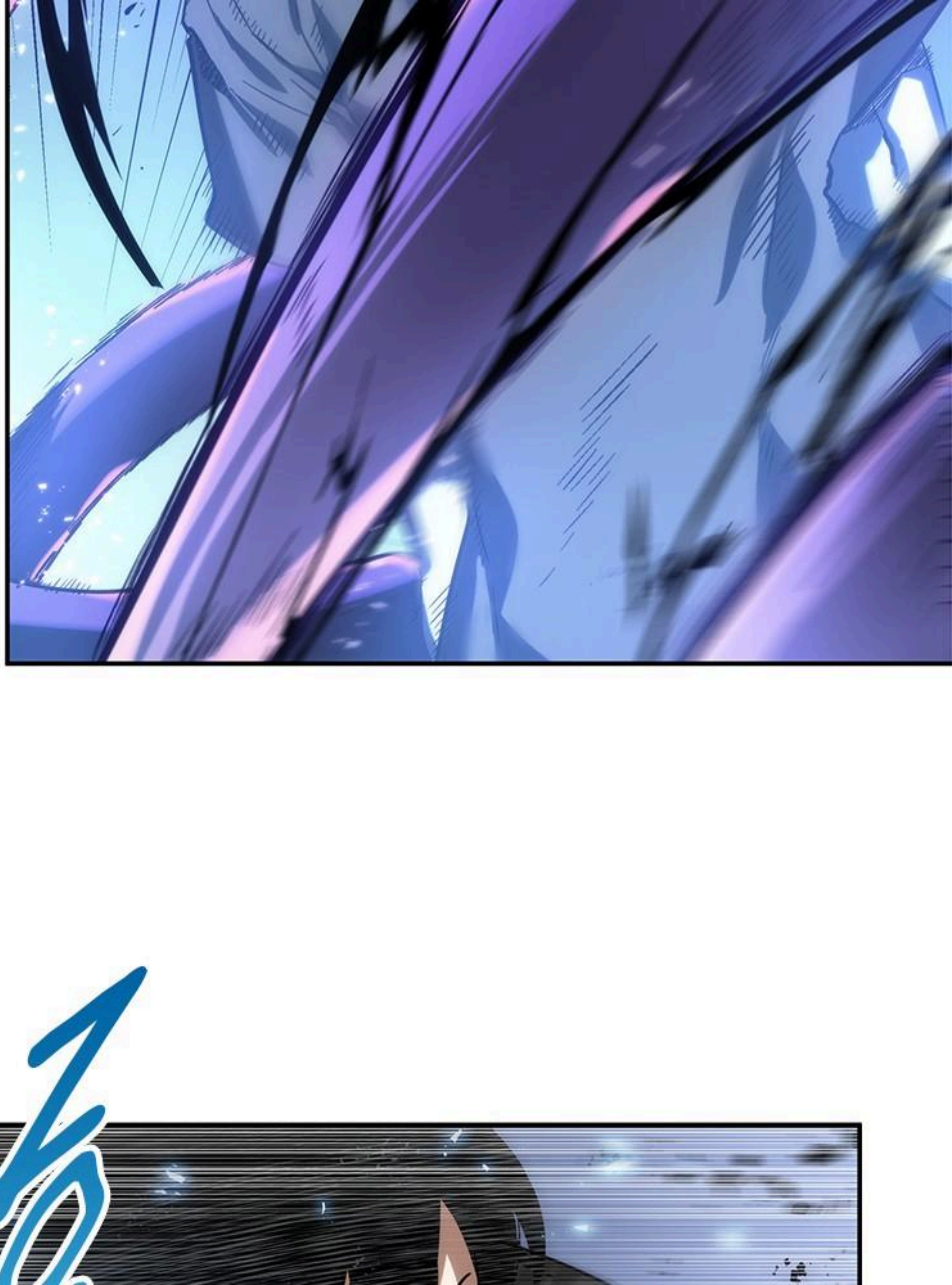
[*BROKEN FAITH* REACTS TO
YOUR MAGIC POWER!]


[BLADE OF FAITH HAS BEEN ACTIVATED!]

GWAAH

WHO

AH



A
CH

GWAAAH
PLOP
PLOP

WOBBLE

GOOD.
NOW I AT
LEAST HAVE
A CHANCE.

BLADE OF FAITH
IS THE MOST
EFFECTIVE WEAPON
THERE IS AGAINST
DEMONIC SPECIES.

I DON'T HAVE SKILLS LIKE [COMBAT SENSE] OR [BLADE PROFICIENCY].

HAVING A POWERFUL SWORD DOESN'T MAKE ME AN EXCELLENT SWORDSMAN.

BUT I'M NOT A SWORDSMAN.
I'M A READER.

DING

IT ATTACKS

[THE EFFECT OF YOUR ATTRIBUTE
IS IMPROVING YOUR MEMORY
OF PAGES YOU'VE ALREADY READ.]

CRACK

!

JUMP

AAH

[PERSONAL SKILL,
BOOKMARK, ACTIVATED.]

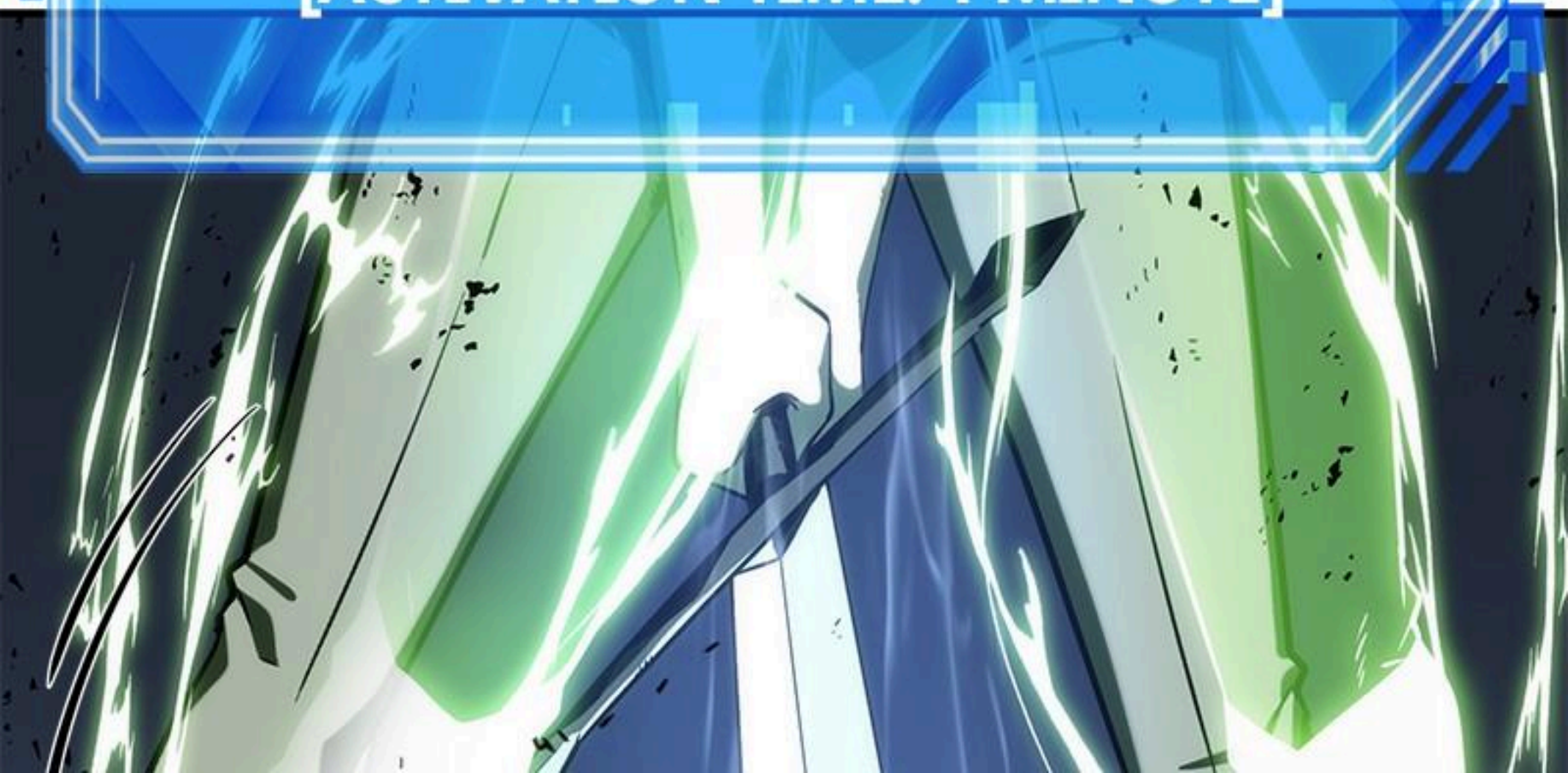
TTER FLUTTER FLUT

[ACTIVATING BOOKMARK NUMBER TWO.]

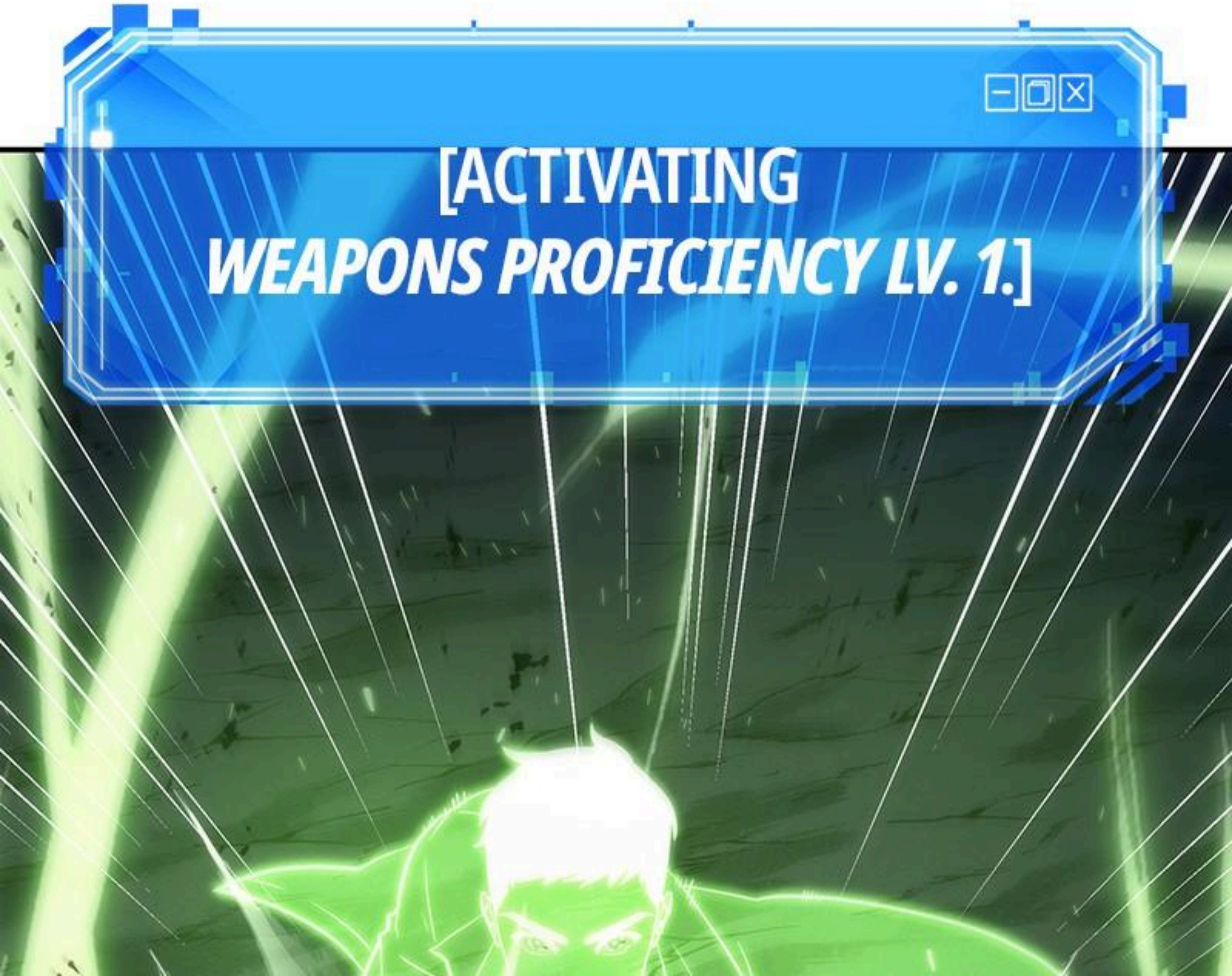
A READER SHOULD FIGHT
LIKE A READER.

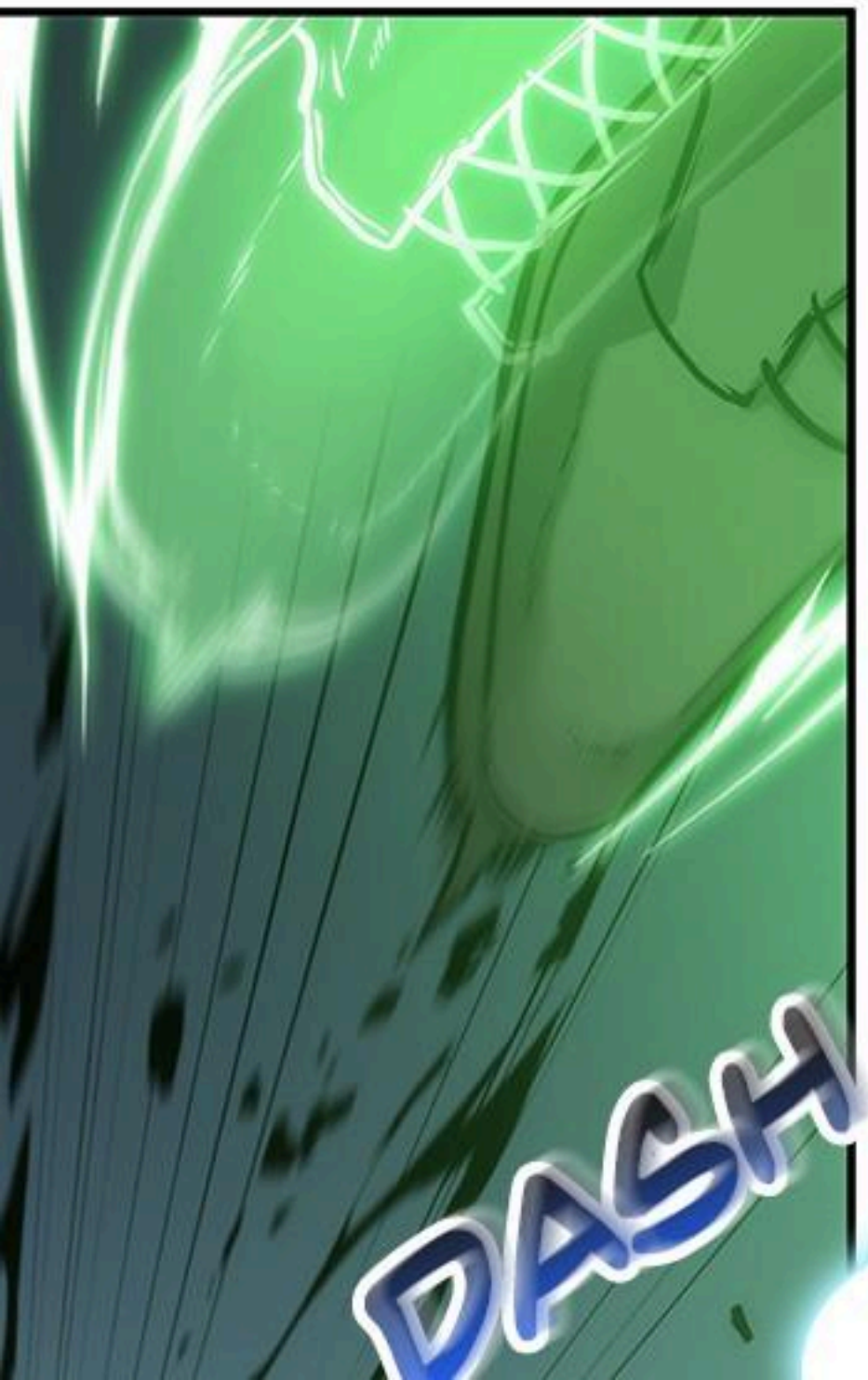
[THE ACTIVATION TIME HAS BEEN SHORTENED DUE TO THE LOW LEVEL OF THE BOOKMARK SKILL.]

[ACTIVATION TIME: 1 MINUTE]



[YOUR UNDERSTANDING
OF THE CHARACTER IS LOW,
SO THE CHARACTER'S SKILLS WERE
ONLY PARTIALLY ACTIVATED.]

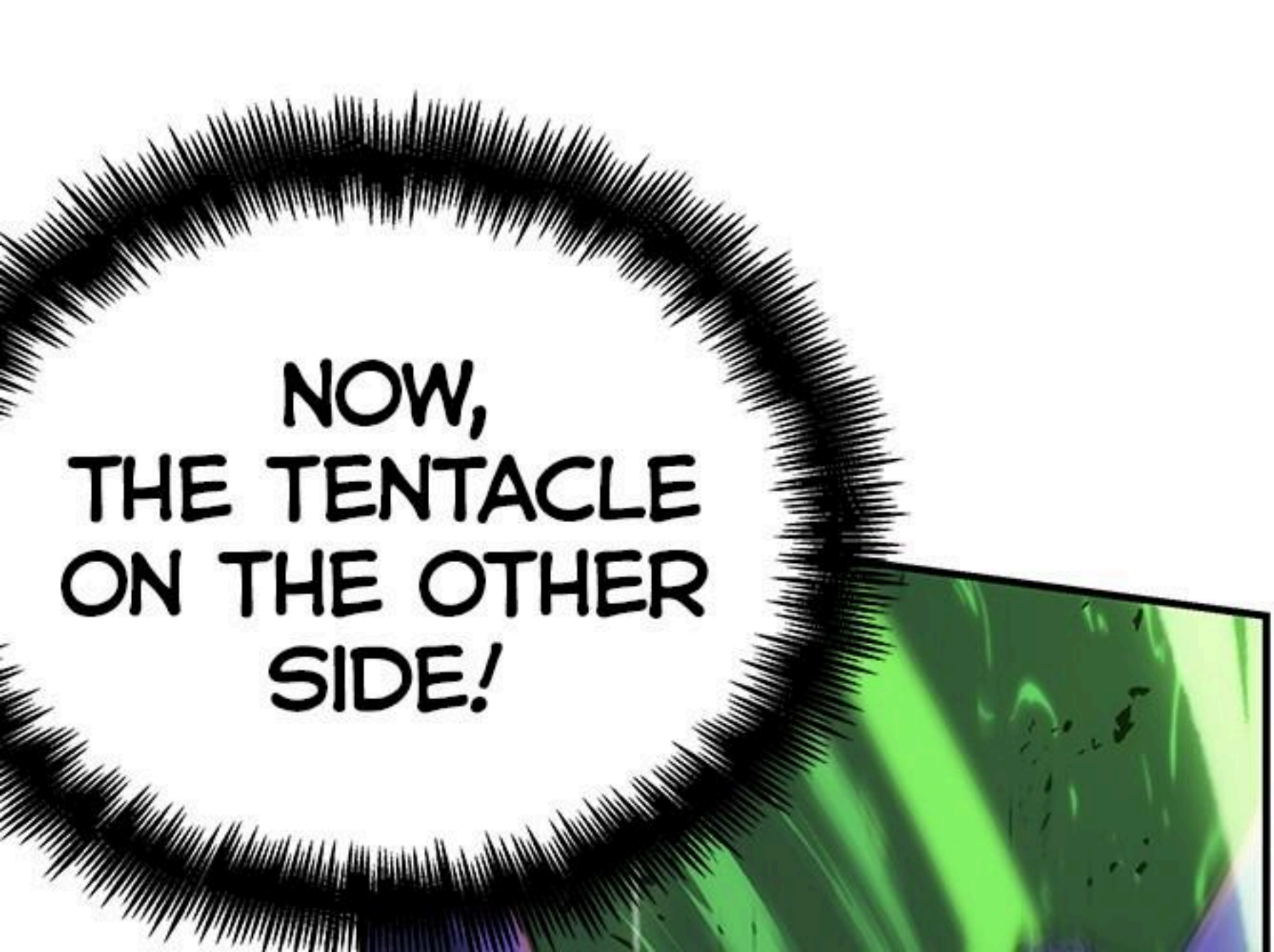

[ACTIVATING
WEAPONS PROFICIENCY LV. 1.]


DASH

SP
L
I

GWAAAH

NOW,
THE TENTACLE
ON THE OTHER
SIDE!



SLASH

AFTER IT ATTACKS TWICE IT ALWAYS...

S

...PAUSES FOR A BRIEF MOMENT!

P

K-KARDU...

...MIEN.

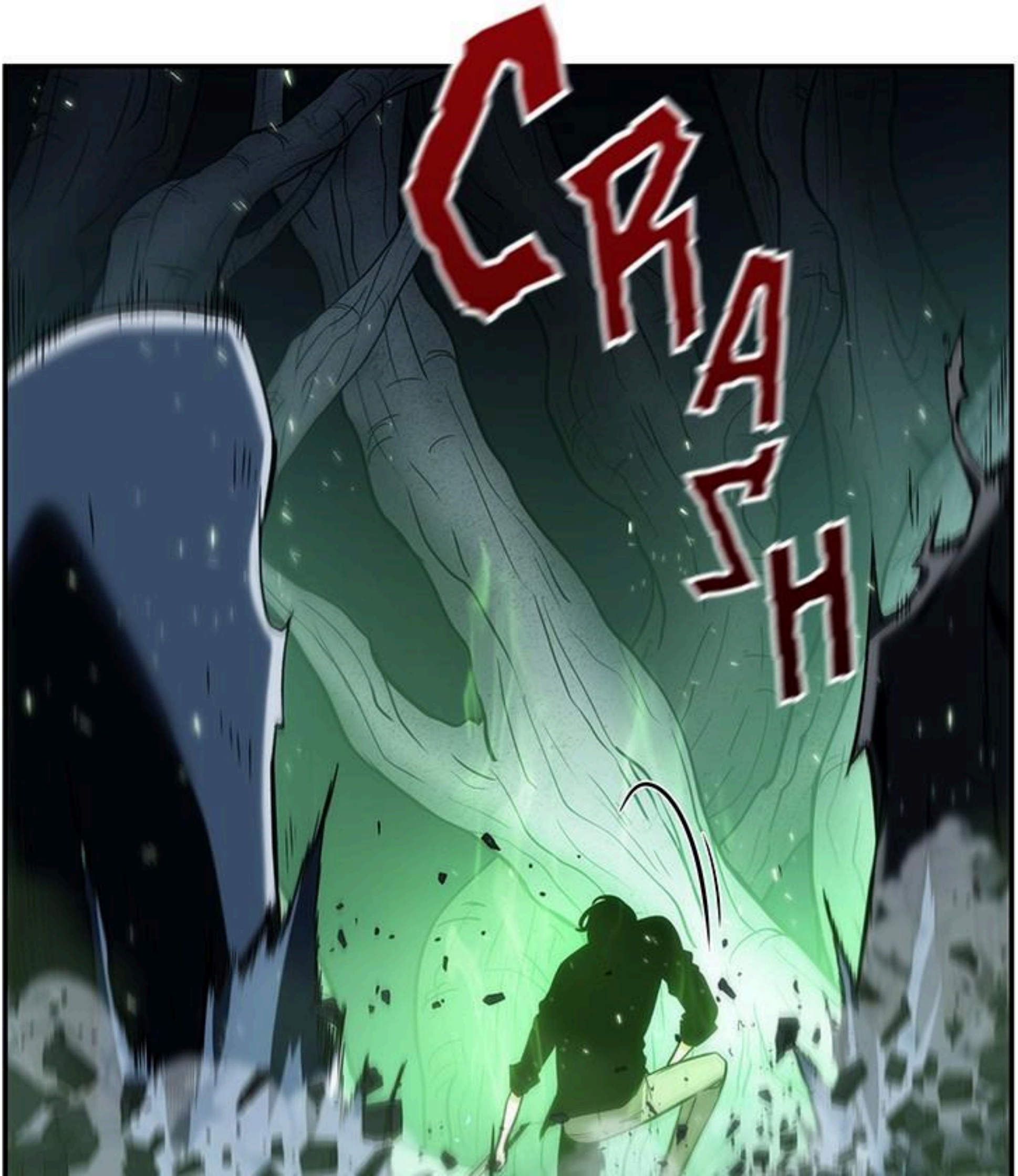
DERO...

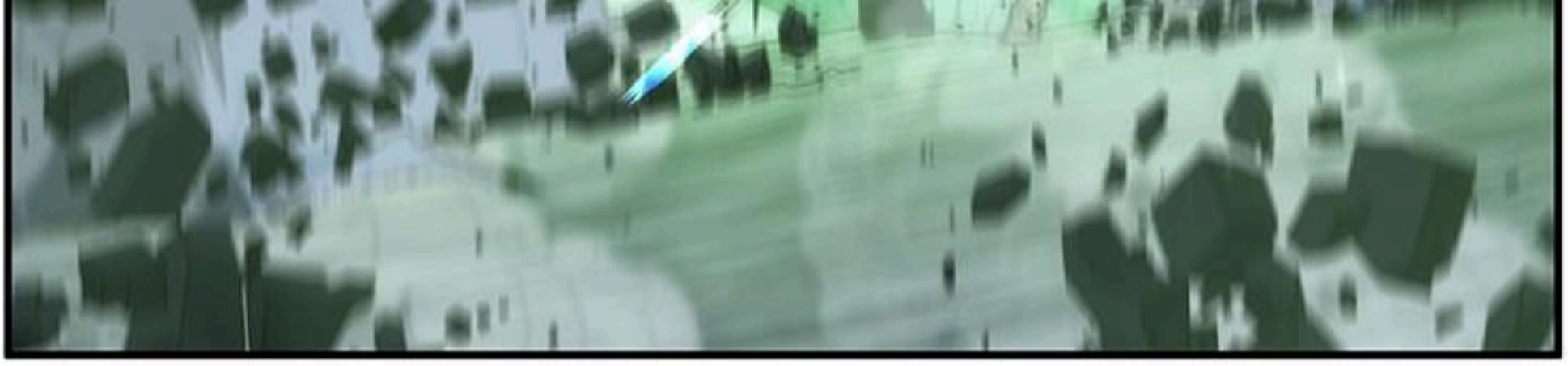
"H-HOW DID YOU KNOW WHERE I'D ATTACK...?"

IS WHAT

IT SAID...

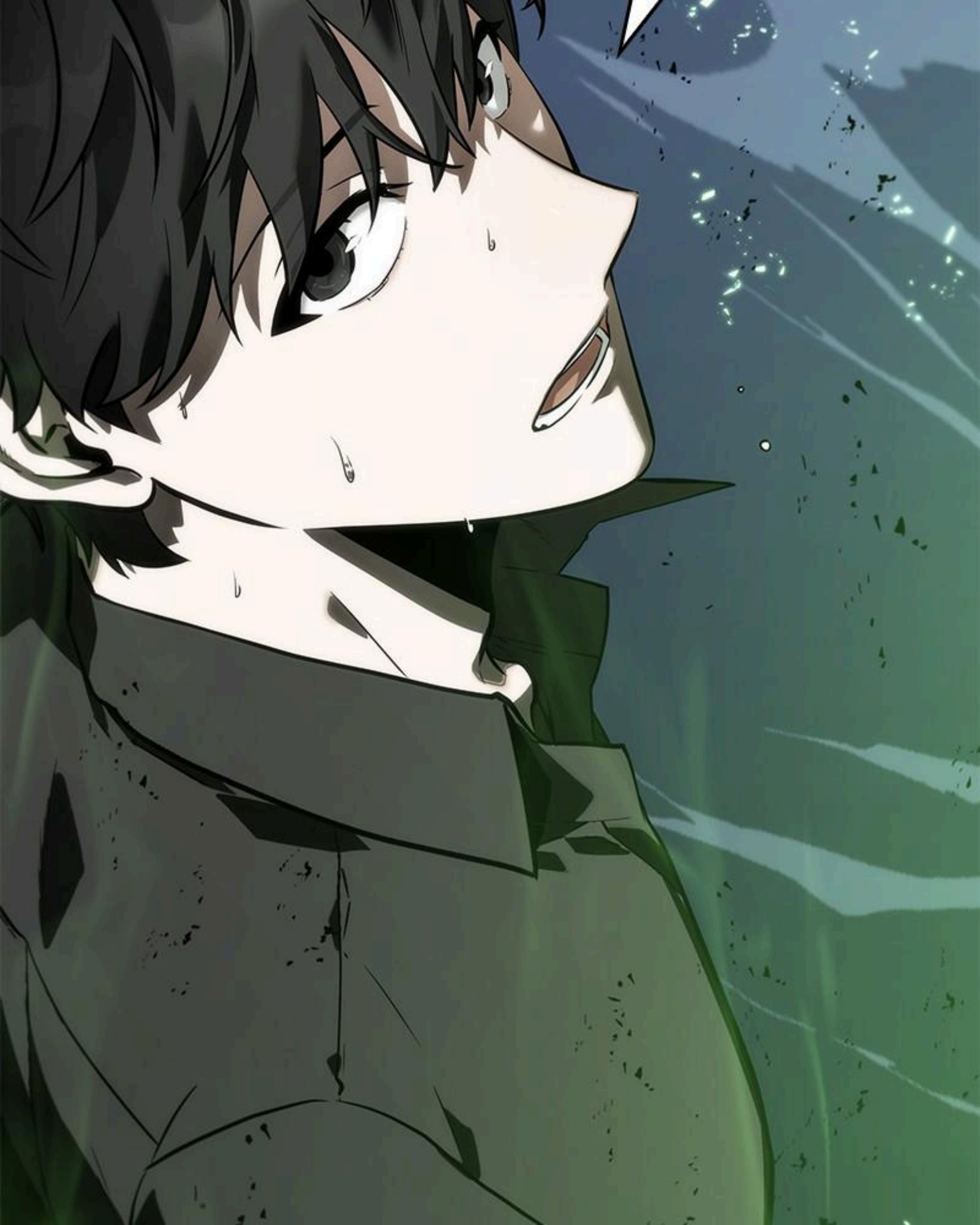
[CHARACTER *SANGAH YU* IS USING THE SKILL, *INTERPRETATION LV. 3*.]


CRACK



YOU
JUST...

...HAVE TO READ A LOT.



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